The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Robert S. Bilheimer:

CHURCH'S MISSION

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By a Hospital Chaplain

WHEN YOU VISIT

A FEW years ago this writer was hospitalized for several months. Observation of a succession of ministers and friends who came to visit produced some startling impressions. Time and other experiences have crystallized these impressions into definite convictions. Believing they are suggestive, they are set down here without attempting to be facetious nor overly critical. They should be qualified by the experience of other ministers who have been hospitalized in other locations.

My first conclusion is that the majority of pastors do not make good visits to the sick. Although conscientious and consecrated in a total ministry, they do not always use good techniques in the sickroom. For instance, all but one of the pastors who visited the writer gave the impression that they had a great deal to do and would rather be some other place than in the hospital room. Admittedly, ministers are busy men. The demands on their time and strength are numerous and insistent. Nevertheless, if visitation of sick members is to be effective, the time should be used properly.

Unpleasant Duty

At the very least, pastors should not bustle into the sickroom as if driven by some inner urge to get this business done as soon as possible and be on the way to more important matters. Most of the pastors who visited me either wore or carried their overcoats, and clutched their hats as if fearful of losing or leaving them. Most of them remained standing, although there was a comfortable chair they were invited to occupy. The impression given was that they were performing a rather unpleasant duty.

A second conviction is that some ministers should not call on the sick at all, in spite of the ordination vow to do so. The vows were too often taken by those physically or psychologically—or both—unfit to make such visits profitable to the patient. If there is any justification for the presence of a minister in the sickroom, in hospital or home, it is found in the contribution he makes toward the patient's present well-being and ultimate recovery. The brother who literally exudes health and whose vigorous voice and violent handshake play havoc with a patient's nervous system—made doubly sensitive by a prolonged illness or great weakness—would do well to postpone his visitation until the later stages of convalescence.

Likewise, I object to the anemic, sad-faced brother who brings some thought of death and the hereafter into the conversation and the prayer he invariably makes at great length. He ought to stay away until the patient is dying. Even then the question of what is to come ought to have a more cheerful and confident setting than is likely to be produced by a pastor who looks like an undertaker and says, in funereal tones, "My brother, are you prepared to die?"

Ministers of Christ

Compared to these, it is a joy to welcome and watch a specialist in the fine art of ministering to the sick. He knows the rules well enough to follow them instinctively. He is so relaxed, friendly, hopeful, that he leaves the patient with a warm sense of his presence and a renewed confidence in God.

There were two or three such specialists among my visitors. They came in quietly, having deposited elsewhere their impedimenta, including their worries. They greeted the patient with a proper concern mingled with quiet hopefulness. They sat down as if they had all the time in the world and preferred to spend it there. They placed the chair so the patient could see them easily. Their attitude was serious without being sanctimonious; hopeful without being pollyannish. They expressed the confidence that God was there too and that his purposes are good. They smiled often and made the patient smile too with a bit of good humor. They did not stay long, nor make an interminably long prayer at the end. The best visit was made by a Negro pastor who stayed three minutes and offered—on his knees—a prayer of three short sentences! They left as unhurried and hopeful as they had come and the impression was definitely that they were good ministers of Jesus Christ who know how to minister to the sick in his name and spirit.

A third conclusion is that too many pastors make social rather than pastoral calls. They leave the patient not a whit better spiritually. This task of visiting the sick is effective only if a real contribution is made to the patient's spiritual well-being, whose moorings may have torn loose. He may be unduly worried about family, work, the

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A Pastor Shares a Hospital Experience with His Fellow Ministers

THE SICK

uture. He may even be fearful. He needs to be re-ssured that "God's firm foundation stands"; that ithin the body God has provided healing re-ources which may be called forth by rest and re-axation, faith and prayer, medication and nursing are. The minister who carries this word of assur-nce into the sickroom needs no apology to doc-rs, nurses or hospital administrators. Indeed ese people, who work constantly with the sick, elcome such a minister as an ally.

Moreover, this assurance may be expressed not nly in terms of Scripture and story, but in the astor's manner and attitude, handclasp, smile nd brief prayer. How much more that means to sick man than gossip about this or that! Many astors do not realize the therapeutic value in a ital religious faith, nor the fact that they may be nstruments of God in communicating that nerapy. If they would recognize that, would take ne task of visiting the sick seriously, would plan, me and conduct the visit in such a way that the atient receives a spiritual lift, this important art of their work might be much more reward-ng to patients and pastors alike.

Techniques for Clergymen

From these conclusions we draw a few simple echniques that ministers should consider. First nd foremost, before visiting the sick, the pastor hould rid himself of all tensions and inner con-icts. People who are hospitalized for long periods re extra sensitive to the tensions in others. The ck member is quick to sense the temper of his astor if he is depressed by some church or family roblem. Until he is free of tension the pastor ught not visit the sick member unless the latter a strong character who may reverse the role so at the pastor goes away the benefactor.

Ministers who visited Henry Drummond in his st illness came away marveling at his courage nd cheerfulness in spite of the excruciating pain e was enduring. Harry Ayres Relyea, a Methodist inister who entered a New York hospital as a guinea pig" for experiments with isotopes, oc-sioned similar reactions. All, ministers included, ho visited him came away feeling they had wit-essed the triumph of mind and spirit over matter. hile it is amazing to see what the average erson can endure when sick or hurt, nevertheless ost of us need the ministry of one or more indi-duals who are so relaxed in their bodies, minds nd souls that they communicate serenity and nfidence to others.

The second suggestion is correlative: Visit when physically fresh and spiritually renewed, not at the tag-end of the day when tired and depleted. Time the visit so it will not interfere with hospital routine. Make the visit unhurriedly. Leave coat and hat outside, if practical. Sit down or stand easily where the patient can see you without straining eyes or neck. Let the whole manner and attitude, words and actions, express the spirit of confidence that beyond what man can do for man, God is able and willing to undertake.

Third, consider carefully whatever the patient wants to say and by all means let him say it in his own way. He may have something on his mind that must come off before the benefits of medication and rest are felt. Indeed, rest may be impossible until he is thus unburdened. A pastor may help practically with some problems bothering the patient. If so, offer your assistance and then follow through to adequate solutions, consulting doctor, psychiatrist, social worker, if necessary, or making complete referral. In the latter event, keep in touch with progress made.

Emotional Conflicts

Sometimes what the patient says indicates an incipient mental or emotional disturbance which, if not nipped in the bud, may cause serious trouble. It may be a mild neurasthenia resulting from prolonged confinement alone with calamitous thoughts. Just talking frankly and fully about these to a disinterested listener is often the only therapy needed.

Psychosomatic medicine has made great strides in the past decade. The effects of mental conflict and emotional strain on the physical organism have been widely studied. It is now estimated that approximately 60 per cent of hospitalized patients are suffering from symptoms for which tests and x-rays show no organic cause. The symptoms and suffering are real enough, but the cause is in the mind and soul, not in the body except as an indirect and temporary condition. Without accurate diagnosis and treatment a neurotic condition may eventuate in breakdown and serious organic trouble. An alert and trained pastor may discern the real difficulty in many cases and contribute to the patient's recovery by making referral to a medical doctor, psychiatrist or a psychotherapist.

Finally, the minister ought to bear in mind constantly that visiting the sick is no mere perfunctory duty carried out in accordance with an ordination vow, but a specialized task requiring thought and preparation. Close liaison with physicians in the community will get him information about church members under their care. Pastors who have the confidence of local doctors will be readily admitted to the team of workers seeking to banish sickness and recall health. In event of long and serious illness, frequent—but often brief—visits should be made, and some of these visits should include the family. Where there is possibility of contagion, necessary precautions should be taken during and after the visit.

When visiting the dying, the pastor assumes

that medical science has gone as far as it can. His ministry then will be governed accordingly. He may be balked in this by a well-meaning but frightened relative. He may even become an innocent party to a conspiracy of silence if not outright falsehood, neither of which is fair.

A pastor friend found himself in the position of carrying out a wife's assumed hopefulness in spite of every evidence that the husband's departure was near. She had insisted that her husband must not be told that he was dying and up to within a few hours of his death this misguided woman kept telling him he was going to get better. To be sure, the resurrection is a guaranty of ultimate triumph over disease and death, but this was not in her mind. Her only concern was that her husband should not be "disturbed" by thoughts of death and separation. In reality she did not want to face these facts herself. Yet when another pastor, who did not know of the woman's desires, spoke frankly to her husband about things to come, the patient commented: "You know, there is something wonderful about dying."

We can safely assume that most so-called "terminal cases" or critically ill persons are aware of the seriousness of their condition. They may even know definitely that they cannot recover. And often they may be longing to face the fact frankly with those whom they love, to make disposal of all unfinished business, to receive the sacrament as long as they can do so "worthily," and in other ways to be strengthened for the journey, as Harry Relyea put it, "through the twilight to the triumph." In all of this a wise, sympathetic, understanding pastor may have a vital part. That kind of ministry can endear even a mediocre preacher to his people and give him the abiding satisfaction of having done well an important and large part of his work in the care and cure of souls.

By Robert S. Bilheimer

From the Executive Secretary Of the Evanston Assembly

Strangers and Sojourners

So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. Ephesians 2:19.

These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted it from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles in the earth. Hebrews 11:13.

BY their different use of the words "strangers," "sojourners," "exiles," these two texts indicate the true nature of the church and its position in the world. They therefore help us to understand the deeper character of its unity. If they do not yield a full ecclesiastical statement of what the church is, nor provide a structural description of its unity, it does not greatly matter. At a time when ecumenical discussion shows us the difficulty which attaches to these matters, it is important to return to the great biblical messages concerning the church. The lack of precision which one finds there may be exactly what we need to open the narrow confines of our thought and practice, so that the Spirit of God may more freely animate our thinking. It may be that we need more urgently than we recognize to stop being strangers and sojourners, and at the same time in truth to become strangers and sojourners in a quite different sense.

The first text is addressed to those who were once separated from Christ, who were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, who were strangers to the covenants of promise, who had no hope and who were without God in the world. It was addressed to the Gentiles, all of those outside the great fellowship of Israel, who now however had come into the new Covenant and therefore into the new Israel. The matter of importance for us about these Gentiles is the way in which they are described. They were people who had made a break; who were once one thing and were now another.

Spiritual Lonesomeness

So described, it is clear that they were people akin to us. The description does not refer primarily to Jews and Gentiles as such; it does not even apply absolutely to those who are church members and those who are not. It is one of those timeless descriptions which strike at the depths of man's spiritual condition. It described the people who were lonesome and who now had had their

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oneliness taken away; people who in the roots of heir soul did not feel that there was anything xcept their soul and its emptiness; people who ad come to realize that they are not alone, but that n even those depths which human friendship can- ot reach they were loved.

Lonesomeness means being without any knowl- dge or feeling that one is loved. It means that one s not aware of any fellowship with human beings vhich reaches those realms where spirit is in com- nunion with spirit. Lonesomeness means that one ives without any commanding sense of direction, nd without expecting anything of the future save ome endless track. Lonesomeness means going hrough life without any great loyalty, because ne has no knowledge that there is anything to vhich one can be loyal. Is there anyone in this vorld who does not know lonesomeness in this ense? Those ancient Gentiles did, and so do all nen. It is all but inescapable that there be times vhen we feel our inward sense of unity slipping way, and with it our unity with the world and vith our neighbors. Strangers and sojourners, lone.

The text says that the Gentiles were no longer uch, in fact, but that they had become fellow itizens with the saints, members of the household f God. This household was built upon Christ. They were therefore no longer alone, no longer trangers in the earth and sojourners upon it. One had come who had made them understand hat they were loved. A power like unto their own pirits, but which they recognized to be of God, ad built them into a fellowship quite unlike their ormer human associations.

The Soul's Unity

This description fits us too. It describes us, that s, if we have been converted in any similar fash- on. It means an end to the loneliness which once possessed us. It means that we belong to a fellow- hip, or as the Bible puts it, a household which plumbs the depths and reaches the heights. It does o because it is a household wherein we are loved vithout any questions being asked, loved for all of our good and bad and indifferent qualities. In it ach one is given a status, not by human grades, ut by God. There is no more wayward wandering f the spirit, no more effort unguided by a Master. Purpose, direction and hope are dominant. Like he Gentiles of old, any man so touched is no longer stranger or a sojourner, but is a man who has found a unity in his own soul, with his fellows and vith the Creator of the world.

The second text speaks of men who, having ived by faith, were always strangers and exiles. These people were a part of the commonwealth of srael, and the restlessness which was caused by onesomeness in the souls of those outside that ommonwealth was replaced by a restlessness aused by a vision given to them by their faith. They had not received, but they had been promised and they therefore had seen in part. They were in between. They had seen enough so that their faith in the full vision could not be shaken. They had experienced enough so as to want to push on to the full possession. They were strangers and exiles because they moved on toward a goal, a city into which they wanted to enter. Local circumstances did not deter them; false promises and empty hopes did not turn them aside. By-paths did not lead them astray. In a lonely world which did not share either their vision or their purpose, they were strangers, never fully at home, always expectant of what the future would bring.

So therefore we, so far as we are members of the household of God, are also strangers and exiles. Having ceased to be alone we must also feel strange. Our direction is different, our hope for the future is not the same, our loyalty is in another place than is that of the world. More deeply, however, we are not isolated, either within ourselves, or among our neighbors, or in the whole world. We are strangers in this world because we are citizens of another world; we are exiles here because we do not sojourn in the world's pathways.

Areas of Strangeness

In what, concretely, does our strangeness then consist? It is important to distinguish quickly that which is strange according to the gospel from that which is merely queer. Too frequently Christians in an attempt to lead a "different" way of life succeed only in elevating curious personal ideas to the status of commands of the gospel, thus distorting the truth and alienating those to whom Christ came to minister. This has nothing to do with those who were in truth "strangers and exiles" because of their faith in God. We would suggest three great areas of the strangeness of the gospel which, it would appear, are particularly important for the church today.

First, we have seen a vision of the city of love, but we have not seen it fully, and therefore we move on toward it. Love cannot be manufactured nor even commanded, but if we are to act as God's strangers in this earth we must so direct our souls toward that which we have seen in part that we press every nerve until the day when we see it full. If this be so, we must then ask whether our churches are sufficiently strangers and sojourners, or whether they are too much of this world. Do we yield to the temptation to substitute organization for love, captured by the formula which tells us that if we will organize effectively then we may accomplish anything?

"Beloved, I beseech you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the passions . . . that wage war against your soul." Does a passion for organization dim the vision of love which has removed the loneliness of our souls? We must ask, too, whether

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we have allowed this same love to become so dim that even in the name of that love we make others lonely. To segregate people in the church because of their color is to do just that. Or is our current unprecedented church prosperity making us self-satisfied and complacent so that we are too encumbered to move as pilgrims toward goal? The household of God is always tempted by attractive elements in the world, but when it yields to them it ceases to move with the strangeness of God.

New Hope

Second, we have been given a gospel. By that gospel we have been rescued from the lonesome strangeness which kills the soul. Yet we must ask what we now do with that gospel, and how it is handled in our present churches. Nearly everywhere we are anxious about our church programs, and this is all to the good, as indeed is our church organization. No one wants a disorganized church nor one in which there is no program. Yet do we offer men a program instead of a gospel?

The memory of our own former lives, even of yesterday, recalls the periods of our own lonesomeness in life. Are not men everywhere, in their different ways, as lonesome as we; as aimless as desperate? Is a gospel being given to them by the household of God, a gospel which shines in the darkness of their souls, which gives them a direction for their lives, which gives them a hope for their future and for their ultimate destiny? One wonders whether sufficient attention is really paid to this essential ingredient of the pilgrimage, or whether we are too busy with substitutes and quasi-substitutes for the gospel to understand its strange depths and proclaim it in its power.

Weakened Through Isolation

Third, we have been given a unity in the household of God. In the pilgrim band "brother clasps the hand of brother." Here surely we have lost the strangeness of God's people. The world's way is the way of disunity, and so far have we gone along that path that even the first beginnings of signs of unity in the church are greeted with acclaim. The eagerness with which the Evanston Assembly was received is the exact measure of the disunity of the church. Unity in the church is so unfamiliar a sight that men rejoice when there is the slightest sign of unity.

Here passions have waged war against the soul, passions of virtually every kind, tearing the church apart, robbing the household of the most distinctive sign of its strangeness in the world, its unity. Thus the aimless sojourning of our former life begins to replace the true strangeness of God. Isolated from one another, we lose our power and again become alone in the world, the only difference being that there are a good many of us who are alone in the same way. A poor consolation that is! How much better that with eyes which have seen but not received we march together toward the promised goal, pilgrims bearing a gift of unity which cannot be given by the world and is alien to it.

We are not asked to achieve the goal before an appointed time. The Bible never gives us a mere counsel of perfection. It holds perfection before us without ceasing and with sometimes nearly unbearable insistence. It speaks of those who live in two worlds, of those who live in the commonwealth of God which is still set within the realms of this world. Members of the commonwealth of God pass through this world, and as they do they mix in it at every point. In this way the church keeps contact with the world and is able to proclaim the gospel in it. Yet as the church moves on its pilgrimage, it is tempted now here and now there always being drawn into too heavy dependence upon the world and compromise with it. Therefore it is of constant importance to review the direction of the pilgrimage, to ask whether we are lost within the world as strangers and sojourners or whether we are in truth strangers and exiles moving through it to the goal which God has appointed.

Sanctuary of Worship

By Frank A. Court

St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.

I THANK thee
For a sanctuary of worship!
A place of beauty set apart
Where my spirit may be swept down aisles of
prayer, up altar stairs of praise, hushed and
renewed by the music of the mighty organ.
So, may I know that I belong to the eternal
harmony
That sings its way down the eternity of time
For the vision and faith of men and women of
other days who, through sacrifice and love
gave us this sanctuary.
May their gifts be enriched, as I also add mine
to be used by thy Spirit.

So, fill my soul with the beauty of thy peace: life
reveals so
much of ugliness that I need the hilltop view
Fill my life with love: it is so easy for life to
become little
and mean through selfishness when we walk
not with Christ.
Fill me with courage: life brings so many
shattering things; but thou, my Father, can
change a cross to Easter joy.
Give me of thyself; no little prayer will
answer
my heartfelt need of thy presence divine.
I praise thy name for
A sanctuary of loveliness, for here I join my spirit
with
countless others who pause to say, "Our
Father";
And, from the rush of every day, find new
strength,
through the holy hush, to journey on life's
way! Amen.

Things by Which Men Live

By Donald Macleod

O Lord, by these things men live. Isaiah 38:16.

NOT many of us in these days read the books of the great Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy. ewer of us, indeed, are acquainted with the deep ruggles of his life, which came to and end in 10. For many decades in the 19th century olstoy's literary genius had made him the idol of s people, yet inwardly he was terribly unhappy. e explored every vice and sin that he knew, but, he wrote in *My Confession,* "My life, a life of dulgence and desires, was meaningless and evil." fact a mental depression settled upon him hich made him so miserable that he was tempted take his own life. There was a piece of rope in s room which served as an old-fashioned fire cape. At night he would lock the rope in a closet id give the key to a friend lest in those long and eepless hours he might hang himself. "I feared fe," he said, "desired to escape from it, yet still oped something of it."

Luck and Success

Then Tolstoy began to take long walks in the elds and the forests where he mingled among the oor, simple and unlettered folk who were strug- ing for bread under conditions more harrowing an slavery. But he discovered that these peasants id a real faith in God which alone "gave their fe a meaning and made it possible for them to ve." So he set out to find their solace. Three years ter God came to Tolstoy as he was alone in the oods. Immediately his doubt, despair and harass- g speculations were resolved and he said "the ad waves of life rose within me." Later he left this simple yet profound and classic utterance: To know God and to live is one and the same ing. God is life. Live seeking God and then you ill not live without God."

Things by which you live. Suppose we take an npartial and objective look at life and ask our- lves: What are the things by which many people y to live day by day?

Here is a man who claims that he lives by sheer *luck.* He is reckless about the rules of life, yet anything upon which he sets his mind or lays his hand seems to come out on top. He was born, so he thinks, under a special star and hence his life cannot be other than a brilliant streak of luck. So he plays life's market with a careless abandon and joshes with anyone who is cautious and astute. Certainly he would scorn Emerson's dictum that only "shallow men believe in luck."

Here is another man who claims he lives entirely by his own *wits.* These times are tough, he says, and therefore only he who grinds and grubs and plods can hope to outwit the other fellows and carry off the prize. He becomes hunched over his little job with every one of his meager powers channelled into a single groove; and there he works, there he sweats, a tight little ball of tensions, with every gain accounted for and every loss lamented.

Here, then, is another who lives by his *successes.* He is on the way up, his friends say. "He's got something on the ball" and "there's no stopping him." Everything he thinks or does is geared for the next step on the ladder to success. You can almost hear his theme song from the musicale *Oklahoma*:

> Oh, what a beautiful mornin',
> Oh, what a beautiful day,
> I got a beautiful feelin'
> Ev'rything's goin' my way.*

To some people these may offer pictures of satisfactory means by which many others live. But what happens when suddenly for some unknown or untranslated reason a man's luck runs out, or he comes to his wits' end, or the grand escalator of success abruptly stops? By what things does a man *then* live?

Lessons from Hezekiah

Our text today brings before us one of those great and moving human experiences that only the Bible seems to be able to present. It was 2600 years ago, about 705 years before Christ was born, and Hezekiah, King of Judah, was moving near to the gates of death. He had been a good king and had instituted many worthy reforms, but now it seemed as if the very bottom had dropped out of everything. All around his little country other na-

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*Oscar Hammerstein, *Oklahoma* (New York: Williamson Music, Inc., 1943). Used by permission.

tions were boiling with tumult and revolution, and even in the best of times Judah was always under the grim shadow of the Assyrian army. Now double trouble was on the king's own doorstep: he had no son to succeed him! In middle life, with a faultless record of faithful work behind him, he could see ahead only the grim reminder from the prophet Isaiah, "Set your house in order, because you are going to die."

Confronted with the shortness of life, the suddenness of death and the dark mystery of the unseen, Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to God and wept, and seemingly asked the age-long question—Why? Then the word of God came to Isaiah to go and tell the king that the Lord had heard his prayer and that he would live! And out from the valley of shadow Hezekiah came, with a song of thanksgiving in his heart and upon his lips this glorious testimony, "O Lord, by these things men live."

Message for Today

Has Hezekiah a word for us here today? What did he bring back from this experience, from this brush with death, from this perilous crisis when he was at the very edge of things? What did he really mean when he said, "O Lord, by these things men live."

I. *Hezekiah learned that you cannot live without God.*

Can't you picture Hezekiah as he basked in the prosperity of his kingdom? Things were going along pleasantly. He was surrounded by the wealth of his art collections and the beauty of his palace, while his reforms kept the people amiable and quiet. Then the blow fell: he was brought face to face with death, and out of this shattering encounter he learned that *the ultimate reality in life is God.*

This experience is not far from either you or me today. We go through life light-heartedly, absorbed with our business and interests and hobbies, least concerned with him who made us all. Some of us take God for granted and treat him either as a mascot to be taken along for the joy of the ride or as a fire escape to be used when things get hot. Others set him up as a sort of statuette to be admired, but never to be permitted to exert a moral claim upon him. Still others attempt to make God into their own image and expect him to come down to do for them what they are too lazy to do themselves. Then suddenly life falls to pieces—a loved one dies and your home is sorely empty, the darling of your life gets polio and you must see him hobble and stumble all his days, or the one in whom you trusted proves unfaithful and leaves an aching gash upon your heart. In the dark you turn your tear-streaked face to the wall and you long for the clutch of a hand that will make everything altogether different. But anything the world gives or offers seems insufficient and disappointing and helpless!

When Mrs. A. J. Gossip died suddenly, her husband, one of Glasgow's greatest preachers, on the following Sunday entitled his sermon "When Life Tumbles In—What Then?" He referred to a marvelous picture in the National Gallery which portrays Christ on the cross and around him the dense darkness of Calvary. But as one gazes steadily at the picture, another figure looms out of the background. Another form is standing by—God's form. Other hands are supporting Christ—God's hands. Another face, more pain-wracked than Jesus' own, appears—God's face. From the depths of his own bitter and harrowing experience Dr. Gossip said, "The presence, sufficiency, and sympathy of God, these things grow very real and very sure and very wonderful."

New Beginnings

II. *Hezekiah learned that you cannot live without forgiveness.*

He discovered that God was the primary necessity in life, that only God could give him a fresh start, only God could forgive. He said, "O Lord . . . thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." Now he was to have a new beginning, but it had to come from a new sense of forgiveness. You see here another depth of meaning behind his words, "O Lord, by these things men live."

No man can ride roughshod over life. No man can presume that his own will is absolute. No man can stride across the world and truculently claim his own rights. Life consists of sunshine and shadow, of give and take, of mountain peaks and lonely valleys, of strange reverses and new beginnings. Every act of forgiveness gives you a fresh start. And it is by these fresh beginnings that you really live. Frankly, I cannot see how some people rise up each morning with all the grudges and hurts of yesterday still festering in their souls, go to work, spend the whole long day insulting and upsetting others, and never, never bow a knee to ask God to forgive them, or to solicit his help to make them good, or to give them the Christian grace to go to some wounded heart and to say, "I'm sorry! Please, forgive me." That is why our world is full of so many touchy, irritable and impossible people today. You see, you simply cannot go on day after day, adding to your ball of tangled tensions, without reckoning with the fact that you need a "soul washing" now and then. This comes when you strike the impossibility of being able by yourself to go on, and you stumble to your knees at the throne of grace and say,

> Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to thy cross I cling.

And God comes and says, "Your sins are forgiven you. Go and sin no more!" "O Lord, by these things men live."

Response of Thanksgiving

III. *Hezekiah learned that you cannot live without a thankful heart.*

When Hezekiah came out from his glimpse into the very abyss of death, when he was saved by the hand of God from the edge of the grave, he said, "We will sing . . . all the days of our life, at the house of the Lord."

This is the radiant note that runs through so much of the Bible. The Psalmist reached the dismal depths of inner distress and bewailed his situation, seemingly turning his face to the wall as he cried, "The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish." Then he called, "O Lord, I beseech thee, save my life!" And God answered him and with a grateful and overflowing heart this servant sang, "For thou hast delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling . . . What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me? . . . I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving . . . in the courts of the house of the Lord . . . Praise the Lord!"

Vindication Achieved

But note this, that when you enter the fullness of the New Testament the praises and thanksgiving of men's hearts are not for what has been done for their own sakes or for little tokens of good luck or for simply getting them out of a jam. These are thankful for the fact that even at the cost of their lives God's name and cause have been vindicated before the world. It is not a matter of rejoicing in themselves or their own good fortune; it is joy over the fact that goodness has been triumphant, that God's purpose has been strengthened, and that the Son of God nailed to a cross has been vindicated.

Remember the story of old Alan Cameron, the Covenanter, who was thrown into the wretched Tolbooth prison in Edinburgh. Suddenly the gate to the cell burst open and in trooped the raw, gruff soldiers carrying something. "Do you know these?" they asked as they swept the cloth away. There Alan Cameron saw the head and hands of his own son, Richard, who had been slain for his stand for Jesus Christ on the bleak stretch between Auchinleck and Muirkirk. He took them upon his knee, bent over them and kissed them, and said, "I know them! I know them! They are my son's, my dear son's." Then he looked up with a marvellous gleam in his eyes and cried, "It is the Lord! Good is the will of the Lord, who cannot wrong me or mine, but has made goodness and mercy to follow us all our days."

Can you picture an hour darker than that? By what things can a man live when the world has hurled the worst against his mind and soul? Who are these people that can in such great moments turn their tears of sadness into tears of thankful joy? These are they whose every venture, devotion and sacrifice are set to the glory of God and for the vindication of his saving gospel. Out of these experiences, faith grows and time confirms the ancient testament, "O Lord, by these things men live."

Customs Free

A CLERGYMAN who was going abroad to study said in jest that when he returned he might bring a new religion with him. A person who was present said, "You may have some difficulty in getting it through the customs house." "No," said Phillips Brooks, "we may take it for granted that a new religion will have no duties attached."*

**Phillips Brooks*, by A. V. G. Allen. Dutton, 1907. Reprinted by permission.

KEEPING IN GOOD REPAIR

A Children's Sermon by Ralph Conover Lankler

First Presbyterian, Cortland, N. Y.

WHEN the motors of our automobiles don't run right, we take them to the garage and the mechanic adjusts and tunes them up. When our radios aren't working, we take them to the radio repair man and he fixes them. When our watches and clocks stop running or are not keeping the right time, we take them to the watchmaker and have them cleaned and adjusted.

There are many things in life which, when they get out of order, we can take to repair men and get them fixed, but we cannot do that with people.

What can we do with you if you are not running right, if you are out of order? Well, if you are sick, and your body is out of order, we can call a doctor. He will get everything working right once again. But let us suppose that it is your behavior that is out of order, the part we call your spirit or character. Let us suppose that you are not as good as you should be. How shall we fix that?

When you want a watch fixed you take it to a watchmaker; if you want a boy or girl made to behave you should take him to the boy- and girl-maker.

Now who is the boy- and girl-maker? Why, it is God. He is the Maker of us all. He understands us. If we will go to him and ask him to help us when everything is not going right, he will put us in proper working order.

Some people do not wait for their automobiles or watches to give them trouble before they take them to the repair men. They have them checked over, cleaned and kept in good shape. That is the way we should do with God who made all of us. We can do this by going to church and Sunday school, and through prayer when we learn his rules for keeping our lives in good behavior and repair. As the Psalmist said, "God is . . . a very present help in trouble."

Cure for Loneliness

By Warren A. Nyberg

I am not alone, for the Father is with me. John 16:32.

EVERYBODY is subject to loneliness at times. It is not a condition reserved for those who have failed to win popularity but a state which comes to each of us. And sometimes it comes in several ways all at once so that a man knows what Odell Shepherd meant when he referred to "the dull ache of loneliness."

Today we shall consider the loneliness which has its roots in the inner man, the isolation one may feel even though he is in the midst of a crowd. Have you known something of this kind of loneliness?

There is the loneliness faced by a leader of people, especially the great leaders. Those of you who have read *The Caine Mutiny* will remember what a despicable character Commander Queeg was. Yet thinking about his responsibilities, Captain Keefer sympathized because, as he explained to Willie, "command is the loneliest, most oppressive job in the whole world."

Kinds of Loneliness

The man of God may feel called upon to follow a course of action not approved by the people—sometimes not even by his church. That can lead to lonely moments, and probably the regrettable thing is that we have not known more of them. Too often laymen and ministers alike do and say things which everyone else is doing and saying. Do we in the church have any distinctive word to offer on the race issue or the drinking question, for instance? Yes, there is the loneliness of effective leadership.

Then there is the loneliness of the man who has violated what he knows to be true. The real tragedy of sin is that the guilt it produces makes the sinner such a lonely person.

We all ought to pray for strength that will uphold us in temptation. But Christian faith says that if a man falls and is burdened by his guilt, he need not stay in isolation. In the words of Scripture, "If we confess our sins," with true repentence, God "is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

There is, to be sure, a kind of loneliness which each of us shares just because we are human beings. No one can enter fully into my experiences; neither can I enter fully into yours. I have seen little children bring home their drawings from first grade, and I must admit that I could not get too excited over them. But now my son is in first grade! The other day he brought home his own drawing of Billy Goat Gruff. There he was on the bridge, and there was the old troll under the bridge. Well, that picture was something to exclaim about!

Inner Emptiness

There is, however, another kind of loneliness which especially concerns me today. It concerns me because it is at the root of so many of our problems. It concerns me because in this state we are wide open for any one of several demonic forces to come in and possess us.

Our problem may be stated simply in this way. We are lonely because we are inwardly empty. Especially illuminating at this point is Rollo May's book *Man's Search for Himself*. He writes that his own clinical practice, and that of psychological and psychiatric colleagues, points to the conclusion that the chief problem of Americans today is "emptiness."

In 1925 T. S. Eliot foresaw this condition when he wrote:

> We are the hollow men
> We are the stuffed men
> Leaning together
> Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
> . . .
> Shape without form, shade without color,
> Paralyzed force, gesture without motion.*

We are inwardly empty people, and because we are empty we are bored. Remember the incident of the Bronx bus driver who drove away in his bus one day and was later picked up in Florida? He explained that he was tired of taking the same route every day, stopping at the same corners and doing the same job. When he returned people made something of a hero of him. The company did not prosecute him and even gave him back his job.

*T. S. Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909-1935* (Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., 1936). Used by permission.

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Why was he treated in such a manner? Could it be that this man who got bored to death was a symbol of the emptiness of many Bronx people? We do not long remain bored. Either we blow off or we get release with someone else's blowoff.

Temporary Crutches

In our boredom we are lonely, and we do not like our loneliness. So we do any one of a number of things. We cannot understand people who drink excessively apart from this fundamental matter. Even our desire to have people around us all the time is an attempt to escape loneliness. We are lonely and so we rush to coffee hours twice a day. We are lonely and so we keep someone talking to us all day through either the radio or the television set.

All of us need others, for we gain much of the sense of who we are and what we are worth from our associations. But many people become so dependent "on others for their feeling of reality" that, says Rollo May, they neglect to develop inner resources and strength.

Most people today are "outer directed," to use a phrase by David Riesman. They live as though they were directed by radar sets which, fastened to their heads, perpetually tell them what other people expect of them. We say we are a free people, that we no longer live under the authority of the church or a political dictatorship. But Erich Fromm has pointed out with insight that people today live under "anonymous authorities" like public opinion. The authority for most people is put in the question: What is everyone else doing? They lack inner standards to decide an issue, for they are empty. And so they look for their standards in a Gallup Poll.

This is the danger in the report of the Kinsey findings. It is valuable for several reasons. But let us not forget that the book is based upon the experiences of only 5,940 women; and this can hardly be a sound basis for determining the experiences of 50 million women. But many will say, "If this is what the majority are doing, then this is what I too should do." A man or woman at his or her best, however, will be asking not, "What is public opinion?" but, "What is right for me?" And the Christian will be asking further: "In determining what is right in my sex life, what does the love of God intend that I should do?"

Inner Resources

If our problem revolves around our inner emptiness, if that emptiness is leading us into boredom and loneliness, and if in our loneliness we seek a kind of dependence upon human associations and human opinions which only alleviates but does not cure our emptiness, is not then the direction of our answer clear?

We must begin to live from within. In contrast to a society which says, "Your life consists in the abundance of things which you possess," we can come to believe that nothing is more important than the thoughts we think and the values we hold to be true. In contrast to a society which gains its values from what everyone else is thinking and doing, we can come to derive ours from God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ.

We must strengthen the inner life. And the center of that strengthening must be in God himself. Do you remember Jesus in this regard? He told the disciples, "The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, every man to his home, and will leave me alone; yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me."

Hearing God's Voice

It was Whitehead who said, "Religion is what a man does with his solitariness." Far from escaping solitariness we are to covet it—yea, daily. And in that solitariness we can listen to the voice of God, who will give to all who ask the ability given to Isaiah, which led him to say:

> They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
> they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
> they shall run and not be weary,
> they shall walk and not faint.

Any of us who will take the time to cultivate the companionship of God, and who will make the commitments which he asks us to make, will come to know an abiding and satisfying cure for loneliness. For God has made us for fellowship with him. He makes us strong, when by ourselves we would be weak. He gives us courage, where by ourselves we would be fainthearted. He gives us assurance, where by ourselves we would be enveloped by "dark nights of the soul."

And let us not forget the fellowship of the church. In spite of all her failings she remains a redemptive fellowship where the lonely, of whatever cause, have found a group who are concerned. Through that fellowship they have been led unto him who has become an unfailing Companion.

"I am not alone, for the Father is with me." With this faith men of God still have problems on their hands. But with this faith there is a trust which gives confidence and a companionship which destroys loneliness.

Joseph Conrad, in *Mirror of the Sea,* quotes from a letter of Sir Robert Stopford, who commanded one of the ships with which Nelson chased to the West Indies an enemy fleet nearly double in number. Describing the desperate hardships of that daring adventure, Stopford wrote: "We are half-starved, and otherwise inconvenienced by being so long out of port. But our reward is—we are with Nelson!"

How much deeper and more abiding the joy of those who through all the hazards and uncertainties of life can say, "We are with God!" If you will allow this to be true in your life, then loneliness will no longer be a problem to you.

Title and Text

ANDREW PERRIN BURTON, First Baptist, Rensselaer, N. Y. "Christianity Is No Secret." Acts 26:26—*This thing was not done in a corner.*

Presenting a Subject upon Which The Church Must Take a Stand

The Sin of Gambling

By James W. Clarke

When they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. Matthew 27:35.

A WAVE of gambling is sweeping across America with all the fury of a prairie fire. It is infinite in the variety of its manifestations. Lotteries, sweepstakes, raffles, numbers, bingo, card and casino games, slot and pinball machines, and wild-eyed stock market speculation are the order of the day.

The number of people and the expenditure involved are unbelievable. Here is big business with a vengeance. According to a Gallup poll, forty million Americans gamble in one form or another. One in three adults takes chances on raffles, lotteries, bingo, and one in five gambles with cards. Sweepstakes and lotteries are held in offices, factories, fraternal organizations and social centers, and even in the service clubs which pride themselves on their work in behalf of youth and their devotion to American law and justice. And alas! The Christian church itself is not beyond this hideous infection, for it frequently not only tolerates but engages in bingo and other gambling devices. The bishop of a certain diocese said not long ago, "There's nothing wrong with a little gambling."

An Expensive Vice

The costs are astronomical. The numbers game takes about ten billion dollars a year, and horse racing was described by *Life* as the "six billion dollar racket." The pinball machine "take" seems almost insignificant with its twenty million dollars. On top of all this, the legitimate investment markets are being demoralized and brought under suspicion by the tens of thousands of small and large time gamblers who "play the market" and expect to make swift and huge profits at the expense of the people's food, clothing and fuel costs. A leading statesman bluntly says, "Gambling is the distinctive vice of the age." But many people don't think so.

Here are some of the things they say:

"Gambling is natural." It is as natural, they proclaim as the impulse to eat, to talk or to sleep. It is not! Man had to learn how to gamble. He is no more a natural gambler than he is a natural football player, tightrope walker, pie eater or whisky drinker! It is true that he has gambled a long time, but the fact that a thing is old does not make it right. If life were true to that assumption, we would still be in the trees, sucking the marrow of our enemies, shooting bows and arrows. Men have been fighting, stealing and murdering for a long time. Does that mean they are always to fight, steal and murder? Slavery existed for a long time. But when it was made illegal, was that wrong? Dueling existed for many years, but was outlawing it wrong? Little children worked in factories for long years. Was it wrong that such work eventually was proscribed?

Then we are told that *"life is a gamble."* How often we hear the statement that we take a gamble each time we cross the street or climb into an airplane. This is simply not so. We take a *risk*, which is a very different thing. If I were to close my eyes in crossing the street, then I would be gambling, but I don't close my eyes. I look left and right to observe the traffic. If the universe teaches anything it is that life is not governed by irresponsible chance. "Order is heaven's first law."

We are also assured that *"business is a gamble."* The very opposite is true. The aim of any business man is the elimination of chance. That is why he studies the market, buys ahead, keeps tab on his inventory, considers his customers' preferences and balances his ledger regularly. Business is a risk, but it is not a gamble.

A Heavy Price

The worst defense of all is the pious statement: "It may be wrong but it's for a good cause!" This is the old claim that the end justifies the means. The teaching of all religion is that we can't do evil that good may come. A thing that is morally bad can never be morally good in its ends. We cannot gather grapes of thistles! Any one who takes the position that gambling is justified because it assists charity should remember that the moral degradation it brings to human personality is too heavy a price to pay for a short and easy way of keeping up hospitals, children's homes, boys' camps, parochial schools and churches. No one has a moral right to exploit the cupidity of the population on behalf of charity.

JAMES W. CLARKE is pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in St. Louis. He preached this sermon as one of his weekly Sunday morning radio-television services sponsored by his city's metropolitan church federation. Born in Scotland, he migrated to Canada and served in its western mission fields, then completed his education at McGill University and Presbyterian College in Montreal. He has recently been elected to the homiletics department of Princeton Theological Seminary.

Now let us turn to the other side of the case. I indict gambling in any form on three counts:

1. *It is a sin against self* because it perverts a noble instinct. One of the creative elements within us is the spirit of adventure, which manifests itself in an endeavor to escape from life's routines by ventures into the unknown, and stimulates us to overcome what are considered insuperable difficulties. The spirit of adventure is seen in Mallory as he tried to climb the peak of Mount Everest, and in Charles Lindbergh as he cut his great arc in darkness and solitude between New York and Paris.

The Case against Gambling

The spirit of adventure is a romantic thing to be preserved and encouraged, but gambling vulgarizes and exploits it by eliminating brains and forethought, making the "cash nexus" the most important thing. Gambling demoralizes the individual because its aim is completely selfish. One's gain in gambling is always another's loss. If you wish to see the most dramatic contrast between the gambling and the venture spirit, look at Calvary. There Jesus makes the *supreme venture* in behalf of mankind. There, also, at the foot of his cross, the soldiers toss their dice.

Gambling is a sin against self, also, because it makes a man a fool. The gambler does things that no person in his right mind would think of doing. When he backs the horses, the chances are 75 to 1 against him. When he purchases a ticket in the Irish sweepstakes the chances are 137,043 to 1; when he buys a chance in a lottery, the chances are 200,000 to 1. It is a fool's game any way you look at it. It involves the abandonment of thought, planning, and reasoning. It surrenders the higher controls of one's being, and places conscience and reason in abeyance.

Morally Injurious

It not only makes a man a fool, but it injures him morally. Do you know of a single character that has been improved by gambling? Do you know of any one who has been made a better husband, father, friend, worker or citizen by it? On the other hand, don't you know many who have been morally ruined by it?

Gambling makes a man a parasite, for it makes him demand something for very little or nothing. Comfort should depend on work, prosperity on perseverance, a steady income on steady industry. But the gambler doesn't want to *earn* his living; he wants to *win* it. He is under the lure of the short cut, and gives no value in exchange for his winnings. The employer pays wages; the employee gives labor. The tradesman gives goods; the customer makes payment. The landlord provides accommodation; the tenant pays rent. The company pays dividends; the shareholder subscribes capital. But the gambler doesn't buy any winnings. He only buys a chance. Value for value is not involved. He makes a fictitious payment in the hope of securing the property of others without giving an honest value in return. The man who does such a thing is destroying himself.

2. *It is a sin against society.* It is destructive of home, for it humiliates self-respect, impoverishes means, blasts happiness and destroys its love. It is destructive of brotherhood, for it denies its essential spirit; one's gain is the other man's loss. It is destructive of sport, as we have seen recently. Wherever the gambler gets in, clean sport goes out. It is destructive of business, because it renders no service, produces no goods, creates no wealth. It is like a dog trying to feed on its own tail. It is destructive of government and the state, for it is one of the main sources of bribery, graft and debauching of public service.

The *Catholic Herald* of Ireland minces no words when it says, "The unhappy fact is now greatly beyond all contradiction that the Irish Free State from end to end, in town and village, and in the country places, in swagger streets and in the poorest slums has become a sordid gambling den. The Hospital Sweeps have given an enormous impetus to this accursed business."

Defiance of God's Law

3. *It is a sin against God.* Make no mistake about this. If a thing hurts personality, then it hurts God's highest creation. If a thing hurts society, then it delays the coming of God's Kingdom. Gambling is a fundamental sin, because it denies God's law of order. He is the God of law and principle, the God of cosmos, not chaos. His universe is organized and ruled by immutable order. It has a purpose because it has a God. The gambler's "law" of luck is the antithesis of the law of God, for it defies divine law, which is the law of certainties. The average gambler is a fatalist, and so denies the intelligent government of the universe by God.

I have spoken very plainly because as a Christian minister I am constantly seeing the terrible results of the gambling vice. It should not, and cannot, be defended; and I appeal to every person, either as a Christian or a patriotic citizen, to avoid it in every form and guise.

Struggle for Peace

THE tensions and difficulties by which we are now beset in all probability will continue for some generations, and then new problems will arise. Peace and justice are never won with security or finality. They are the object of continuous striving. In this struggle for peace and justice, Christians and churches have a distinctive contribution to make. I do not claim that their effort will of necessity prove successful, but I am convinced that the effort must be made. Into God's hands we commend our bodies and souls and all that is ours, sincerely praying that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. Therein lies our hope. The outcome rests with God.—*Frederick Nolde, before the World Council of Churches' Second Assembly.*

To Be Remembered in the Midst of America's Religious Crusade

A 'Little Less than God'

By Sidney E. Mead

You will be like God. Genesis 3:5.

THERE are two central facts about man. The first is that he is not God; the second is that he always tends to act as if he were.

The first should be obvious. God the creator is infinite; man the creature is finite. The one final, constant and inevitable reminder of his finiteness is death. "It is appointed for men to die once"—this is the one inescapable fact that is present in all of life. Yet it the one fact that man seems most reluctant to admit. By a strange paradox, the more empirical in outlook modern man has become, the less willing and able he appears to be to deal realistically with the outstanding empirical fact about his life.

Man's reluctance to accept his finite creaturehood is one of his oldest characteristics, and defines the essence of his sin. The most plausible account of the origin of all sin is that in Genesis 3, wherein it is said that the first man and woman yielded to the blandishments of the subtle serpent —the father of all lies—who told them, "You will not die," but on the contrary, "You will be like God."

Sin of Sins

The "sin of sins," as Horace Bushnell said, has lain in man's "refusal to be lovingly and justly finite"; his refusal really to believe in his own finiteness, his tendency to try to "be like God" and to forget that all the Lord requires of him is "to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with" his God.

The hard fact is that man's aspiration to "be like God"—to act as if he *were* God—springs not out of his weakness and low estate but from his strength and high position. The Psalmist says,

> Yet thou hast made him little less than God,
> and dost crown him with glory and honor.
> Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands;
> thou hast put all things under his feet.

This is man, the inexhaustible wonder-worker, born of nature and of spirit "to have dominion" over all the tangible, visible world, and to put "all things under his feet." The first commandment given was, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion . . ." Why must man act? it is often asked. Because this is what he was commanded to do, or, what is the same thing, because it is his created nature to act —to do with his might what his hands find to do. This is what he is here for—to "subdue the earth" and "have dominion" over it.

A Wonder-World

And this he has done, and done it beyond the wildest imaginings of the scriptural writers from Genesis to Revelation. Man walks in a wonder-world today, served by the powers of the earth which he has subdued and fashioned to his will until the fears that haunt *us* are not the primordial fears of God's created nature. And this is good, as God is good—for Jehovah looked upon all his creation "and behold, it was very good," and he commanded man to "have dominion" over the good earth he had created. This in itself is not evil, and man should feel no guilt because of what he has done in this respect. He has but exhibited and insofar fulfilled his proper role, which is to be in relation to all created things a creator.

A "creator" to be sure he is, but a creator who by nature is "a little less than God." For man remains a creature of God. The essence of man is to be a creator with almost but not quite infinite possibilities. Always skirting the fringe of the infinite, he remains finite, and his one saving insight is that of the Psalmist, "From everlasting to everlasting *thou* art God." Man, to be sure, is "little less than God," but that "little" makes all the difference between himself and God.

It is forgetfulness of this "little" that constitutes what we call sin, that estranges man from the one true God, corrodes his relationships with his fellow men and leads to his inner turmoil and outward chaos.

Man, created to "have domonion" over all other created things, forgets that he himself is excepted —forgets that no man was *created* to have dominion over his fellow men—and tends to usurp the place of the infinite God. For example, the president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railway wrote in 1902:

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> The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for . . . by the Christian men to whom God in his infinite wisdom has given the control of the property interests of the country. . . .

Andrew Carnegie thought the ascendancy of
ıese men illustrated "the survival of the fittest
ı every department" of life, under the immutable
ıws upon which "civilization itself depends";
ıat these "fittest" men were called to administer
ıe resources of the nation *"for* the community
ar better than the community could or would have
one for itself."

More recently, it is said, one in high position
uggested as a rule of thumb for the conduct of
ational affairs, "What is good for General Motors
s good for the country."

It is but a short step from playing God for one's
ellow men to slipping over the invisible line of
nite creaturehood itself, identifying one's imme-
iate and perhaps good cause with the will of the
ıfinite God and speaking as did Henry Ward
Beecher in 1863: "This continent is to be cared for
y the north simply because the north has been true
o the cause of Christ," and henceforth it is to be
governed by northern men, with northern ideas,
nd with a northern gospel." We think, Horace
Bushnell echoed in 1864, that "our cause . . . is
specially God's. . . . God is in it everywhere . . .
very drum-beat is a hymn, the cannon thunder
God, the electric silence, darting victory along the
ires, is the inaudible greeting of God's favoring
ord and purpose."

Playing the Part of God

When the religious leaders of the nation give
ıis kind of guidance, it is not to be wondered at
ıat a mere junior senator from Indiana could
peak as did Albert J. Beveridge in defense of the
nnexation of the Philippines:

> We will not renounce our part in the mission of the race, trustees, under God, of the civilization of the world. . . . He has made us the master organizers of the world to establish system where chaos reigns. . . . He has made us adepts in government that we may administer government among savage and senile peoples. . . . And of all our race, he has marked the American people as his chosen nation to finally lead in the regeneration of the world. This is the divine mission of America, and it holds for us all the profit, all the glory, all the happiness possible to man. We are trustees of the world's progress, guardians of its righteous peace. The judgment of the Master is upon us: "Ye have been faithful over a few things; I will make you ruler over many things."

inally, holding up a gold nugget, he cried, "I
cked this up on the ground in one of those
lands. There are thousands of others lying
out."

It was not a minister of the gospel but a fellow
nator who rose to rebuke Beveridge with a pro-
undly Christian reply. All Senator George F.
oar said was:

> The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

That was in 1900. More recently some of us have been troubled by a somewhat alarming outbreak of what a Presbyterian minister has aptly called "Piety Along the Potomac." It is alarming precisely because and only in so far as it appears to identify America, and at times even one party in America, with God.

We Are Not God

This at the present juncture of events is not difficult to do, especially since the tendency to forget that man is a "little less" than God is the oldest sin in the Book. Just now the temptation to forget it is exceedingly great. For the mighty enemy of Christianity and civilization as we know it is communism, and the communists are professedly godless. But recognition of this truth, which is necessary and highly commendable, may easily permit us to step into the untruth that because the enemy is godless, therefore *we* and *our* ways are godly altogether.

This doesn't mean that we are to make no distinctions of relative merit, of better and worse. I hold with the man who said that next to the grace of God is the ability to see differences where significant differences exist. Therefore, I do not suppose that it is inherently wrong for Christians sometimes to thank God that they are not like other men—like these godless communists for example—*unless* it leads them to suppose with the Pharisee that *they* are already justified and need no repentance. The Christian, if like the Pharisee he is to thank God that he is not as other men, must also beat his breast and cry out with the tax collector, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

This combination is not too obvious in America today. It has even been said before a congressional subcommittee and reported in the press that those "who seek to improve this country" are playing into the hands of the communists. This suggests that there is abroad in the land a forgetting that however good we may be—and we are very good —nevertheless we are still "a *little* lower than God," and that "my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord."

Tool of Our Purposes

Personally I do not object to opening Cabinet meetings with prayer; to prayer breakfasts at which the Vice-President reads the New Testament and all join in singing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"; to red, white and blue postage stamps bearing the motto "In God We Trust"; to the insertion of "under God" in the pledge of allegiance. I do not even object to turning a political campaign into a great "crusade" having as "one of its major aims the 'revival of the spiritual faith of our fathers' "—provided that what is meant is the "spiritual faith" of the Puritans and Abraham Lincoln and not that of Henry Ward Beecher and Albert J. Beveridge.

But what troubles me is what troubled the recent writer in *The Reporter*—that "the current wave of . . . piety" appears to be becoming "offi-

cial"; that religion appears to be becoming good politics; that "the object of devotion is not God but 'religion'" itself; until there is real danger that "God may be seen [by self-righteous men] not as the *judge* but as the *tool* of our national purposes." For this not only obliterates the saving insight that man, however good, is after all a "little less than God," but it inverts the proper relationship by making God an ally of our cause, a tool for man's purposes. It is a far cry from Jonathan Edwards' "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" to God in the hands of self-righteous men.

Abraham Lincoln was of course under tremendous pressure even from ministers to deify the cause of the north, as the quotations from Beecher and Bushnell make clear. But he did not yield. And his uncanny knack for putting first things first was revealed in the reply he wrote to the clergyman who expressed the hope that God was on the side of the north.

> I am not at all concerned about that, for I know that the Lord is always on the side of right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side.

There is the really Christian heart of the matter. And although the gaunt man from Illinois was more likely to open a serious Cabinet meeting with a chapter from Artemus Ward—a contemporary Robert Benchley—than with a prayer, nevertheless the people sensed the rugged integrity of the fellow and dubbed him "honest Abe."

He never more deserved that name than he did when he delivered his second inaugural address. He hardly needed to begin with a formal prayer, because throughout the address was a prayer of the whole man, for and with the whole people. And it was true and universal because it was based on a clear recognition of the two central facts about man with which we began.

Finally, finite man must live day by day by faith in the infinite God; must be reconciled to God's will. Then if his appointed path leads to a cross, he still can say in simple trust with Jesus, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Therefore, let us "judge not, that" we "be not judged," and "with malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in."

I will enlist in any "crusade" that proposes to revive *this* "spiritual faith of our fathers," and unashamedly I call you to do the same.

God's Lighthouse

IF Christians take seriously their unity in Christ, this means that they become engaged in that very quality of *love to man* which is characteristic of Jesus Christ. You might be startled—especially on this American soil—if I put the consequence like this: Christ does love even the communist peoples.

This does not mean that we should make a sweet soup of all the mess we are in. Jesus himself neve did make such a soup of world affairs. He spok out distinctly about any injustice and violatio He took a firm stand against lies and falsification against God-denying wickedness of all sorts. H was in solidarity with sinful men, but not in so idarity with sin. He was the Prince of Peace, bu never a prince of war, disguised in a mantle o peace.

As Christians we are duty bound to keep th glasses of Christ's lighthouse clean. His red sig nals warn against wickedness and injustice; gree ones guide us to good will and peace. Those tw lights on our course over the oceans of time mus always be guiding us.—*Eivind Berggrav, befor Second Assembly of World Council of Churches*

A Pastoral Prayer

By Roy M. Pearson

Dean, Andover Newton Theological School

O THOU God and Father of us all, thou wh art high and lifted up and yet who hast re vealed thyself most surely in the child of Bethle hem, we turn to thee and pray that thou wilt teach us how to live. We confess to thee that, call ing ourselves the masters of our fate, we have bowed the knee before a host of tyrants exer cising lordship over us—before the fear of failure and the greed of gain, before the opinions of our friends and the ridicule of our foes, before hatred and envy and lust and doubt.

We confess to thee that, calling ourselves the captains of our souls, we have served as galley hands below the decks of life, never lifting up our eyes to the hills of thy help nor seeing the far hori zons of the more abundant way. Stir us from our lethargy, we pray, and tell us till we heed how thou wouldst have us live and move and have our being on the earth.

Keep us from being so insecure within that we hide our fearfulness behind a wall of arrogance and anger. Save us from being so frustrated in the things we want that we vent our disappointment with ourselves on those we meet along the way. Spare us the guilt of spending all our pleasantries upon acquaintances and friends and all our ugli ness upon our husbands or wives, our mothers or fathers or children.

Protect us from trying to exalt our own position in the world by defaming that of those with whom we daily deal, and from attempting to conceal the poverty of our own minds by bearing false wit ness against our neighbors. Grant us the courage to see ourselves as others see us.

From thee we came, O Lord. Unto thee we go. And in thee we spend each day we live upon the earth. Unto thee then we would commit ourselves this day. We give ourselves freely into thy keep ing and care, praying that thou wilt lift us up when we fall and bring us back when we stray. For we are as the sheep of thy pasture and as the lambs of thy fold. In Jesus' name. Amen.

For the Beginning
Of a New Year

Walking with God

By Thomas Taylor Faichney

Genesis 5:21-24.

I WILL begin with a confession. This is the first sermon I have ever preached on Enoch. From my earliest associations I have thought of him as a very other-worldly sort of person. Somehow "walking with God" wasn't for ordinary folks. Recently, however, I came upon this sentence by Georgia Harkness, in *Religious Living,* which set me thinking: "In order to walk it is necessary to keep one foot on the ground and the other off the ground." So if Enoch had "one foot in heaven," then in order to walk he had one foot on the earth.

I read again his brief biography, and found him quite pedestrian like the rest of us. A married man with a family. He would have to care for that family even as others, and to provide for them he would have to have one foot on the ground. Then I noted that something very wonderful happened to him when the first child was born: "Enoch walked with God after the birth of Methuselah." Through him the fellowship lost in Eden was restored. Adam and Eve heard "the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Then for seven generations man was out of step with God, but now "Enoch walked with God." Was it not for such companionship that man was created? "What does the Lord require of you but . . . to walk humbly with your God?"

The Legendary Enoch

Again with Enoch there came a new concept of that strange tragedy which began with a murder, that awesome intruder called Death. "He was not, for God took him." As the little girl said in telling the story, "One day they went for a longer walk than usual and forgot to come back." O Death, where is thy sting!

> There is no death! What seems so is transition;
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
> Whose portal we call Death.

With the passing of the centuries Enoch became a legendary figure. He is enrolled with the heroes of Hebrews II. During the period when Apocalyptic literature was in flower, one anonymous writer entitled his book "The Book of Enoch" and is quoted by Jude. In reading Alexander Whyte's *Bible Characters* one is amused at the high hopes entertained by Whyte when he first heard of "The Book of Enoch." Feeling sure that therein he would find the secret of Enoch's walk with God, he was utterly disillusioned at the "rubbish-heap he found in this inflated and fantastic book," and he ends by stating that "in the short biography in Genesis is more beauty and guidance than in all the 'Book of Enoch.' "

Let us look then at this short biography in Genesis 5. I would spare you a reading of the previous verses but a true perspective of Enoch can be secured only in the light of these. The chapter begins with Adam, then Seth. "Seth . . . lived . . . became . . . [a] father . . . and he died," as did Enos, as did Kenan, as did Mahalalel and Jared. These all lived, begat and died. One is reminded of Mark Twain's short sermon. Called upon to give the sermon at a boy's school, Mark Twain went up to the rostrum, opened the Bible and slowly turned over the pages, then said, "This will do . . . Genesis 5:27, 'All the days of Methuselah were 969 years.' " Twain lifted up his eyes from the Book and continued: "Nine Hundred and sixty-nine years. He should have been ashamed of himself. No man has a right to live 969 years. Let us see what the Bible says, 'And all the years of Methuselah were 969 years, and he died.' Quite so, he did nothing. Be warned!"

Something Happened

So of all the patriarchs before Enoch, the chronicler has nothing to say. But coming to Enoch is like finding an oasis in a desert. Now will you note that Enoch was the shortest lived of the patriarchs. Most of these lived to nearly 1000 years, Enoch to 365. Say the life span were 100 today, then Enoch would have died at 33. It was at that age our Master died. Enoch may have been the shortest lived of all, but he put quality into that life.

Like every other patriarch, Enoch grew to manhood; then he took a wife like the others. He seemed to be running true to pattern. But one day he took into his arms his first-born, made in his own image. It was a hallowed moment, and "Enoch

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THOMAS TAYLOR FAICHNEY has been minister of First United Church, Galt, Ontario, since 1939. In 1951 he was president of the Hamilton Conference of the United Church of Canada. His latest book, How the Bible Grew, *was published in 1954 under the sponsorship of the Christian Education Department of the Canadian Council of Churches. During the past summer he filled preaching engagements in London and Edinburgh as well as at the Barony Kirk in his birthplace, Auchterarder, Perthshire.*

walked with God after he became the father of Methuselah."

Now that experience of Enoch rings true. Every father knows these hopes and fears. When a man looks on his first-born the angels are not far away. It is a moment when man and God come very near together.

"Enoch walked with God." Instinctively we shy away from these words. The experience seems lovely but unreal. But is it so? What a day it is in a home when the baby begins to walk. Mother notes it in baby's diary. Father gets out the camera to take a picture of baby walking. It is a day to be remembered. Perhaps we should so mark the day when we begin to walk with God. For sheer beauty is there anything comparable to the words of the Father of us all, "When Israel was a child, I loved him . . . I taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms"? Walking is something we anticipate in the life of every son of Adam, so walking with God is what we should expect of every son of God. Why walk with God? Why walk with any person? We walk with a person for company—when we are seeking a destination and he knows the way, when the going is difficult and we need help, when there are dangers in the way and we need a friend. In the walk through life we need God.

Keeping in Step

When we walk with a person we instinctively get into step with him, and walking *with,* we begin to walk *like* that person. "Do two walk together, unless they have an appointment?" I saw a lad slouching along the road with a rolling gait, his arms flailing the air from side to side. I looked at his companion walking in the same manner; I saw it was his father.

Two disciples followed Jesus. "What do you seek?" "Rabbi, where are you staying?" "Come and see," and they went with Jesus. That walk changed their lives. Zaccheus the miserly publican came down from the sycamore tree and began to walk with Jesus. There happened to him what happens to everyone who walks with Jesus. He grew in moral and spiritual stature. "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold."

> By walking with Jesus, like him thou shalt be
> Thy friends in thy conduct, his likeness shall see.

The Epistles have much to say about walking, for those who are in Christ. "Walk by the spirit . . . in love . . . in the light . . . in newness of life."

To walk we must have one foot on the ground and one foot off the ground. The statement is sometimes made with approbation that "he has both feet on the ground." But it is a questionable compliment, for if both feet are on the ground he is standing still, he is getting nowhere. To get anywhere one must walk; and to walk, one foot must be on the ground and one foot adventuring. Where will that foot come down? So much depends on that; it may lead to the church, it may lead to places of wickedness. It may mean life, it may mean death.

Man is a pilgrim. He is going places. With one foot on the ground, that is one foot in time, he has one foot in eternity. One foot in the temporal, one foot in the eternal. One foot in the real, one foot in the ideal. He is a citizen of two worlds. He needs a divine Companion to make human achievement possible.

Learning Through Experience

The art of walking is only learned by walking. A man learned the art of swimming, the story goes, by means of a correspondence course. He conscientiously studied all his lessons, and finally, having learned all that the course had to give, he jumped into the water . . . and was drowned! Some things are only learned by doing.

Church, sermons, friends—all will help but we will get nowhere until we walk with God. "Take up your bed," said Jesus, "and go home." The greatest of all ventures, as the Gospels testify, is to start walking with Jesus. So changed were those who walked with him, they were called those "of the Way."

If that is true for life it is equally true for death, for that is a road we go alone, unless we can make that great affirmation of faith, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me." With such divine companionship it may be said of us as it was said of Enoch, "He was not; for God took him." They went for a longer walk than usual, and forgot to come back!

Morning Prayer

By Herbert Beecher Hudnut

Woodward Avenue Presbyterian, Detroit

OUR God and Father, we bow in thy presence, not because we are afraid, but because we reverence thy holy name. We come as children to the Father's house to eat at a common board, to commune with the Father of our spirits and to share with others in worship.

We come as suppliants to plead thy mercy, for we are weak, to ask thy pardon for the wrong we have done, to seek the assurance of thy forgiving grace.

We come to intercede on behalf of our families, our friends, our city, our state, our country, our world. Surround our loved ones with providential care. Give aid through us to those in need. Protect the larger community from besetting sins and onrushing degradation. Defend us from our enemies and make our world one in brotherhood and fellowship.

We come to pray for the church of Christ, of which we are a part, that his church may go from strength to strength, that every hour may be one great hour of sharing, and that God's Kingdom may reign in the hearts of all men, both now and forevermore. Amen.

Mountains That Cannot Be Moved

By C. W. Kirkpatrick

"If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move hence to yonder place,' and it will move." Matthew 17:20.

THESE words of Jesus have brought into being the expression "mountain-moving faith." It is often difficult for us, however, to believe that God's miraculous wonders can be bestowed upon us today. Sometimes we are like the woman who read our text in her Bible and then spent the entire night praying to God to remove the unwelcome mountain behind her house. In the morning, rising from her prayer, she looked out her back door to note that the mountain was still there. "Humph," she snorted, "just as I expected."

It is not enough for us simply to pray. We must pray believing. And since we can scarcely believe that God would upset his law of nature to move a troublesome mountain for us, we must conclude that Jesus did not mean for this statement to be taken literally. Or perhaps it would be better to say it can be taken literally when we fix our sights on the right mountain.

Wrong Mountains

God has been at the business of creating the beautiful mountains of our world for millions of years. We can hardly imagine that he would permit their removal at the whim of folk who find them inconvenient at times. Nor would normal people, in their better moments, want them moved. The woman who prayed in vain for the removal of the disturbing earthly mountain should have directed her attention to another which was her real problem—the mountain of selfishness which moved her to pray the Lord to move the mountain of earth and rock to suit her convenience. God did not establish natural law in the first place as a tentative order, to be set aside whenever necessary to suit the whim and pleasure of his children, for he created a universe of consistency and concord, not chaos.

It would be absurd to think that Jesus, in our text, could be referring to a mountain of earth. What then was his point of reference? No doubt it was to such dreadful mountains as those of despair, frustration, ignorance, lust—mountains formidable but manageable—which overshadow and plague our lives.

Often the man of strong will and faith can conquer his frustrating mountain by direct attack. His fervent prayer will ease his pain by healing or dispel his ignorance by enlightenment. That will be true in cases that do not violate God's natural law. But what of the instances where the mountain cannot be moved—the case of the incurable disease, the loss of a loved one, the tenacious, horrible memory? In such an instance we must not give up in despair. For the trouble may be simply that we are concerned with the wrong mountain. Our Lord states in our text that the mountain can be moved. But we must have the wit to discern the one which is movable.

The story is told of an orator giving a reading of Kipling's "If." He came to the line, "If you can fill each unforgiving minute with sixty seconds full of distance run," and was then stopped by an interruption from the audience, "What if you can't?" That is what we all want to know sometimes. Let our answer be a paraphrase of the popular proverb, "God never closes one door before you without opening another"; namely, "God never lets one mountain block your way without showing you a path leading to another that can be moved." Or, to change the figure, a mountain which can be conquered, climbed or tunnelled in some way. For what is conquest if not removal of the obstacle?

Life's Detours

The apostle Paul prayed thrice that God would remove his "thorn in the flesh." But God's natural law had ordained that this was an immovable mountain. Paul noted that fact as the Lord spoke to him saying, "My grace is sufficient for you." Obviously the solution to Paul's problem was the conquest of another mountain which would clear the way for him to pursue his pilgrimage of victorious living. The mountain which could not be moved was his "thorn in the flesh"; the one which could be conquered was his anxiety about his affliction. When he realized that he not only ceased to worry about his trouble—he actually gloried in it! He achieved his victory when he concentrated on the right mountain.

It has been said that sometimes one must cope with his problem, not by getting rid of it, but by

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learning how to live with it. It just will not budge when pushed. So one must sometimes learn to live with the immovable mountain. Even as the route is changed to bypass it, the glance to one side shows it standing there. But it is no longer grim and foreboding.

As a case in point, consider the matter of painful memory. Think of one who has been horribly disgraced or humiliated. He cannot change the fact of what has happened. That is the immovable mountain. What has been done cannot be undone. When the wound is fresh and raw it is natural to feel that his whole future will be clouded by the tragedy. Oh for the sweet balm of forgetfulness! He tries to forget, and the harder he tries the more vivid becomes the memory. He is trying to remove the wrong mountain. Rather let him redirect his efforts and assault the mountain of his engrossment with his wretched memory. Then his plan of attack will be to busy himself with the daily round and avidly seek out new fields of creative activity and service.

The Soul's Imprisonment

As time goes by the process of healing will slowly but surely be at work. When the recollection of the horrible occurrence invades his consciousness, as it sometimes will, he will find that it is progressively emptied of the pain which was once so intense. He will learn to live with the immovable mountain, and he will conquer the vulnerable mountain because he had the wit to know the one from the other and the will to tackle the right one.

How often we have noted this pattern of action among those who have achieved true greatness. Booker T. Washington saw that he could not remove the mountain of the white man's prejudice and discrimination against the Negro. He could and did conquer the mountain of ignorance and backwardness of his people. Starr Dailey, the reformed criminal, could not remove the mountain of his prison bars. He could and did conquer the mountain of despair and hatred which imprisoned his soul. By daring to show love and good will toward his cruel guards he changed their attitude toward him and, more important, changed himself so that when he was released from prison he became a good citizen and an eminent Christian.

To my thinking, one of Norman Vincent Peale's greatest stories is the one about the boy born with the withered leg. Frustration and heartbreak were his daily companions as he found himself unable to run and play, to live normally. He seemed to be sidelined for life. But his father, a man of unlimited faith, said not to worry about the leg, for some day they would go to the cathedral, and there, before the altar, God would heal him. The time came when father and son went to the cathedral in great hope and expectation. They prayed with fervent faith.

Finally the father announced to the boy that he should now give thanks for he was healed. But the lad, looking downward, saw only the same pitiful, deformed leg. In deep disappointment they left the cathedral. Then the boy stopped abruptly, an unusual warmth in his heart. Feeling that a great hand had passed over his head and touched him, he cried out in wondrous happiness, "Father, you are right, I have been healed." Boy that he was, he had the insight to recognize that, though the brace remained on his leg, "God had taken the brace off" his mind.

Glorious Conquest

Physical healing did not occur. That was the mountain which could not be moved. But the boy's spirit would not be vanquished, and God would not let it be. Together they assaulted the mountain that had to give way—the mountain of maladjustment in the mind and heart of the lad. And the conquest was a glorious one. How often we are concerned with the wrong braces. So many times it is those that shackle the mind and spirit which must be broken.

Look within yourself to find the mountain that can be conquered. Do not pray to God miraculously to upset the laws of nature for your special benefit. When you cannot move that unyielding mountain of reality, try for the conquest of the mountain of your overanxiety, fear, lack of confidence in yourself or lack of faith in God. Then you will find, as did Paul, that God's strength will be made perfect in your weakness. Yours will be a new vision, insight and high achievement when you concentrate on the mountain that can be conquered. Such a mite of faith, as a grain of mustard seed, properly directed, will bring monumental results.

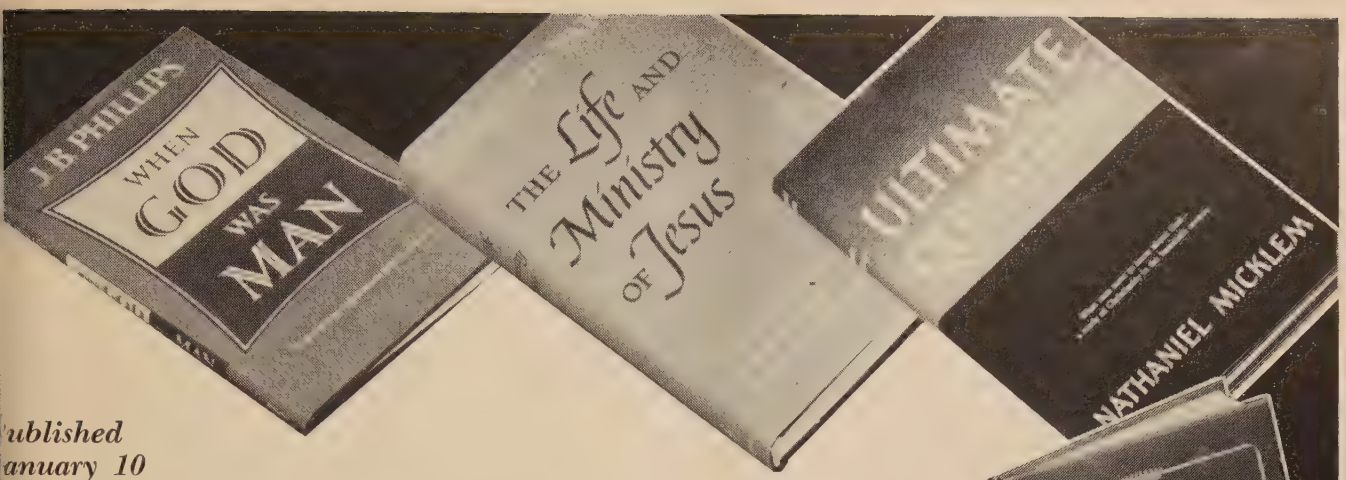
Prayer for the U.N.

By Joseph F. King
First Church (Congregational-Christian), Oberlin, Ohio

ALMIGHTY and ever-living God, thou hast called all the children of men to be members one of another and to lift their spirits to thee as Father. Thou alone art the source of our confidence, our strength and our hope during these perilous times.

Grant, we beseech thee, thy divine blessing upon the United Nations and its work. Under its guidance draw together the nations that in cooperation and amity they may by thy infinite mercy bring a larger measure of justice and peace and abundant life to all people. Help the United Nations, its international servants and the leaders from many lands, to work unceasingly to heal the deep hurts of our divided and anguished world.

Strike from our hearts the national self-righteousness, pride and selfishness that cause hatred and division between persons and countries. Teach us to love one another as thou hast loved us. Consecrate each of us anew, that in our dealings with one another and with other nations we may do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with thee. Amen.



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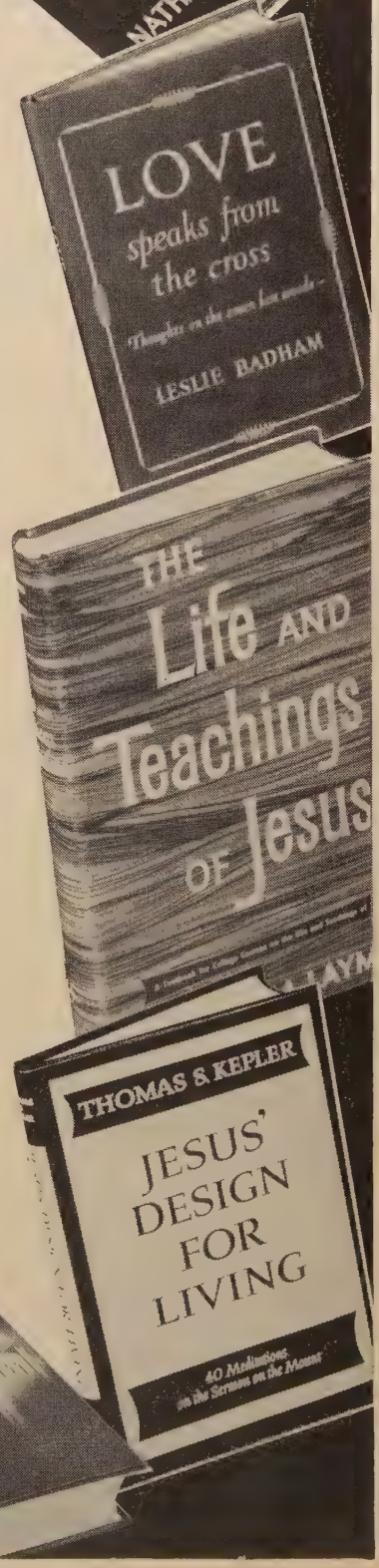
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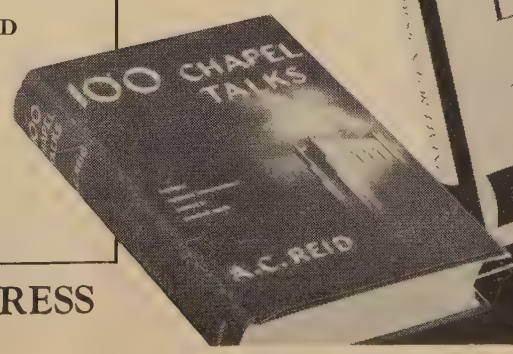

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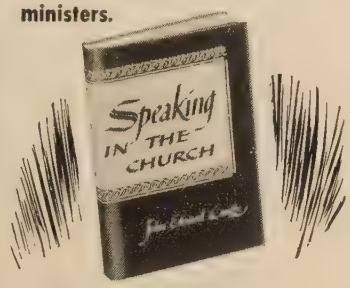

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Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

Let the Church Be The Church

IN this column I have occasionally remarked that I am distinctly allergic to large doses of that lusty apocrypha so beloved by tiresome parents and perspiring pulpiteers, The Wit and Wisdom of the Child. In passing I may remark that (1) I am perfectly familiar, and have been for many years, with several New Testament utterances which seemingly at least may be quoted against me; (2) I wish that the most freely quoted one of them had not been among those preserved for posterity.

Now having said this—consistency should never cramp one's style, and for most preachers it rarely does—I must confess that I said "Good boy," when I read the Pulpit Paragraph contributed by Mr. Haas to November's issue. Johnny, you were dead right. The church *is* people. And I am glad of your subsequently added two words. They belong there, too. But my first pleasure—and I must confess my deepest one—was, Johnny, that you had more sense than many of your elders, including the editors of Webster's dictionary. For to too many the word "church" does not mean people; it means a building. I am quite aware that usage makes for dictionary meanings. I am also aware that Canute set himself a hopeless task, too. I am sure that the meaning, "a sacred building," is here to stay. I am equally aware that it is a secondary and unwarranted meaning which, as is so often the case, has proved to be the dispossessing camel. That is, to revert to the language of Zion, "in the beginning it was not so."

A Place for Meeting

Our ancestors—that is, if you had the right ones—were wise in the word they employed for the building: it was a "meetinghouse." Precisely. That is what it was and what it ought to be—a place for the meeting of men and women in their continued quest for God. Yes, Johnny, I am quite ready to applaud your appended two words: "and God."

That the calculated purpose of the meeting was for the worship of Almighty God I do not question. Indeed it was. In fact I am sure that it was ostensibly the only purpose, but I am equally sure that however foreign from their minds it might have been it was not the only purpose. Even more than now—though life, especially on the "sabbath," was a pretty serious affair, with no foolish concessions to comfort or pleasure when it came to worshiping an austere and exacting God—there was after all a social element mighty prominent in the meeting of men and women in common assembly. Actually, I seriously question the possibility of any understanding worship or of love for God without the opportunity of seeing him envisaged in those about the worshiper.

But be that as it may. In the good honest word "meetinghouse" we surely have a far closer parallel to early Christian thinking, if not actual diction, than in the more modern word which has proved a bit too all-embracing in its spread of meaning. Here neither word is big enough; we need them both.

Four-Square Words

I freely concede that the word "meetinghouse" conjures up that all loveliest of American buildings, that veritable gem in its dignity and simplicity, still to be found in many a New England village—yes, and occasionally on less privileged earth too. Thank God, Dr. Morrison, for at least this contribution from up near the north end of the "axis of national influence." Yes, the good homely word does suggest that sort of building rather more than it does the productions of Cram and Wentworth, or Goodhue and Ferguson; yet in so far as these awesome and by no means entirely acclimatized Gothic creations are for the assembly of men and women, meeting together on a common level for the worship of the one whose they are and whom they try to serve, they are meetinghouses, despite their mullioned arches, ornate windows and carvings, and (no longer strictly honest) flying buttresses.

Perhaps to some all this will seem trivial. It isn't to me. My mind was particularly receptive to Johnny's reported insight, for I had just been hearing for, it seemed, the thousandth time the word "sanctuary" in connection with what was being done to a remodeled "church"—and that from a New England woman who should have known better and ten years ago would not have spoken thus.

I shiver at this growing tendency to use a nomenclature so reminiscent of much of the actual revamped arch

(Continued on page 25)

The Story of the Second General Assembly of the World Council of Churches

EVANSTON: An Interpretation

by James Hastings Nichols

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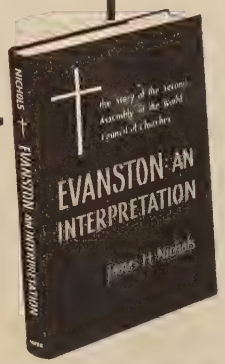

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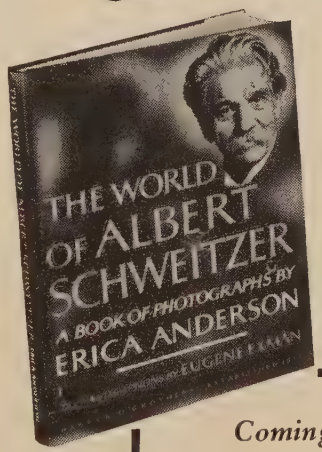

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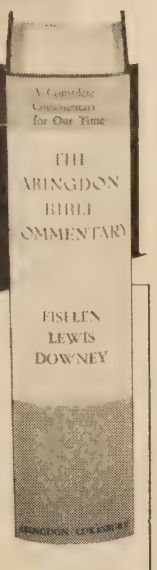

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Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

The World Council's Art Exhibit

THE Art Institute of Chicago made possible one of the interesting phases of the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches. From galleries and individuals throughout the world the Institute gathered 30 masterpieces of religious art and set them up to splendid advantage in an installation designed by William Friedman. In these galleries visitors were able to see what painting could do in setting forth the topics and emotions associated with Christian experience.

Such a visual expression has a direct relation to this column, for religious art is part of the total liturgical experience. Worship inevitably occurs in a setting. Only the pure mystic becomes oblivious to time and place. The average worshiper seeks to pray in his living room amid familiar surroundings or on some windswept promontory out of doors or in the church, supported by the conventional Christian symbols and perhaps a mural here and there. These surroundings stir his emotions somewhat and blend with the other elements of the service which make up the total liturgical experience.

Religious Impact

In this Art Institute exhibit, visitors had a fine opportunity to explore the various types of murals which might well adorn the walls of our churches and chapels. Here were paintings, ancient and modern, conventional and different. Here was an opportunity to explore the spiritual impact of these various approaches to religious art.

It was interesting to discover the religious disappointment associated with some of the conventional thematic pictures. Just because a painter described through visual art some historical moment in the Christian tradition, it did not result necessarily in a corresponding religious response from the observer. This observation is not by way of criticism of the artistic merit of the picture. Paola Veronese in depicting the "Rest on the Flight into Egypt" gave us a painting of magnificent color and fine craftsmanship. The composition and general balance of the picture is excellent, the Holy Family intensely interesting and the angels clinging to the trees very adorable indeed. Nevertheless, the painting has a secular rather than a religious accent. One is inclined to say, "Very charming, indeed, but so what?" Except for the wings on the angels one would have no idea at a that the picture attempted to crystalize any religious moment.

The same criticism might be mad of some of the other paintings such a Lucas Van Leyden's "Adoration of th Magi," with its exquisite interest i beautiful still life, and most pa ticularly, Van Dyck's "Christ Blessin the Children." It could be that th central figure is Jesus but the ligh falls not upon him but on the patron who ordered the picture. Here i Madame, adorned in her best, togethe with all the young children whose por traits are done by this master portrai artist. The result is entirely secular because the interest is secular. It i hardly a picture of the real Chris blessing real children.

Religious Treatment

Only when traditional themes ar handled in a religious manner do the prompt Christian response. This oc curred in such paintings as "Rest o the Flight to Egypt," by Quenti Massys, "The Crucifixion," b Cranach, "The Deposition of Christ, by Rembrandt, and very wonderfull in El Greco's "Christ in Gethsemane. The latter is one of the remarkabl classical paintings using the conven tional religious theme. Its religiou impact is tremendous, for the artis has given the simple garden them cosmic significance by bringing to i all the billowing forces of natur which rise to participate in this awfu moment of commitment.

A painting does not have to se forth a conventional theme to be re ligious, however. Nature has long bee known as a source of religious inspira tion. Witness the lines written abov Tintern Abbey by Wadsworth. In thi exhibit two such paintings brough the observer to grips with the im minent God. The visitor stood befor Millet's "Angelus" and bowed befor its simple honesty. Against this twi light sky, with the silhouette of th church's spire in the distance, stoo a man and a woman—any man, an woman—in recognition of the Divin Being whose presence pervaded thei world. With deeper excitement on stood before Van Gogh's "Starr Night." Here was the lyrical lift o the cypress tree to complement the lif of the village church spire in th distance. Above them both was th night sky full of whorls of light in

termined undulation. If one looked ng enough these words became the wing garments of the Creator and e whole room was filled with the ivine Presence.

Modern Paintings

The modern accent in painting often nds a powerful accent to religion. ot always, to be sure. Witness hagall's "Calvary" which is so per- nal to the artist that it means little the observer.

Two other modern paintings at the hibit were more forceful. "The Last pper," by Andrea Derain, is one. is a cubist painting which sets forth e Master surrounded by his disciples the simple table of the Upper Room. aces are only suggested, colors tend ward pastel shades, posture and de- gn are full of infinite melancholy nd lamentation. The whole picture is marvelous depiction of the essential ood and spirit of that sad moment in me.

The other picture is Lebrun's Descent from the Cross." It is a diffi- lt picture to understand at first ght. One needs to look at it for a ng time. When one does, however, e utter dejection, the seeming awful nality, the last lamentable human ffort of the crucifixion, are all set orth. The story is over and done. The st rites have been rendered. Figures re bathed in pain. A pall of dejection s upon it all. Here is a contemporary icture with tremendous impact.

Enslin

(Continued from page 22)

ecture itself: a Queen Anne front nd a Mary Ann back. And my vote for Mary Ann—not misspelled Marianne," if you please. "Audi- orium," "table," "Lord's supper"— hey are all four-square words and are ot made one whit more holy when ransformed into "sanctuary," "altar," the holy and sacred sacrament of ommunion."

Yes, we had a rewarding service at ur meetinghouse this last Sunday at eventeenth and Sansom.

The Bulletin Board

Contributed by E. Paul Hovey, Federated Church, Lewiston, Idaho

TO GROW TALL SPIRITUALLY ONE MUST FIRST LEARN TO KNEEL.

THE STEEPLE OF THE CHURCH POINTS TO GOD, NOT TO MAN.

SHOULDERS THAT TAKE ON RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE NO ROOM TO CARRY CHIPS.

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Sermon Summaries

Vitiation by the Visionless

By Marshall Wingfield

Memphis, Tenn.

Where there is no vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18. (A.V.)

THE word vision is used in three senses: as the perception of the physical eye, as the perception of disordered fancy, and as the perception of insight. It is in the last sense that the word is used in our text. This is the vision which saves a people from perishing, penetrates to the root of things, apprehends causes, discerns the drift of events and recognizes the right use of human and divine resources. It looks behind the transitory shape of things seen by the physical eye and sees the inner reality.

John Ruskin was speaking of the world's need for men of vision when he said: "Hundreds of people can talk for every one who can think, thousands can think for every one who can see. To be able to see clearly is poetry, prophecy and religion all in one."

Predictions of Doom

"Where there is no vision [of God], the people perish." They perish because man cannot live by bread alone. When man falls under the delusion that material things are sufficient, and loses what the psalmist called "trust in the Lord," he also loses that which undergirds personal character and social well-being. When man disregards or discredits the spiritual basis of life, he goes against the very structure of the universe and, therefore, against himself.

Today we hear that man is doomed by his own inventions. During the past decade, the menace of mind minus morality has been the theme of many poems and sermons. No person who has read it can ever forget Farrow's poem "Ultimatum Expires Midnight" as it surveys the ghastliness of war and begs God to take away the skill, the inspiration, energy, ability and talent that result "in such deviltry."

Shortly after the explosion of the first atomic bomb, Clifton Fadiman wrote in the *Saturday Review* that the detonation was man's announcement of his inability to make a biological success of himself and that the next few years will constitute the era of despair as planetary war cracks the earth's thin crust and the race commits wholesale suicide. This awful prediction may come true, but not of necessity. The way of doom is not the only way out of our dilemma. Man can envision peace; and what man can envision, man under God can bring to pass.

The Deed Must Follow

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." The author might have added that even where there is vision, the people still perish if the vision is disobeyed. The achievements of the Apostle Paul have been the wonder of 19 centuries. Some of his biographers have said that his 13 Epistles do not supply enough data for us to discover the secret of his world-changing career. But that is erroneous. A single sentence yields the secret. Speaking before King Agrippa, Paul told of his vision on the Damascus road at the time of his conversion. Then he added, "O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

In every life that has come to coronation, the deed has succeeded the dream. Without the deed, the vision soon fades. But the world is richer when the artist transfers the vision to canvas and when the sculptor releases the angel which he sees in the imprisoning stone.

Winning the War of Ideas

By Donald Douds

Hanover Street Presbyterian, Wilmington, Del.

The sons of this world are wiser in their own generation than the sons of light. Luke 16:8.

AS a nation, we have a secretary of war. Why not also a secretary of peace, to mobilize our country for peace, to invent new sociological and psychological methods and techniques—as amazing as the atom bomb—for creating peace? We need a department of peace, with as many billions of dollars and millions of men as has the department of war.

We are ringing the world with military bases. Why not with peace bases—centers where peace and democracy would be taught and spread to millions?

All over our country we have military schools to train our youth in the science of war. But we have no peace schools to train them in the science of building international peace. Many of our universities have military training courses. But the world's best course in peace making, to be found in the teachings of Christ, is conspicuously excluded from our public schools and universities. We want peace, but what a strange way to go about it!

We have a West Point for the army, an Annapolis for the navy, and now an academy for the air force. Why not an academy for peace—an institution where the ablest young men of America would be trained in the practical techniques of building good will and democracy, and then sent out with a drafted army of a million men to help establish peace, friendship and democracy over all the world?

In this way we might beat the communists at their own game. For is not this the way they work? They are waging a new kind of war—a war of ideas. When they want to conquer a country, they do not declare war. In-

ead they send in thousands of ained, disciplined workers who be- in to spread ideas, to convert, train, rganize the people of that country or communism. After this period of raining, they take over the country. hey fight with ideas. And until we oo learn to fight with ideas, they will ontinue to win. Our colossal folly is n thinking that we can stop an idea ith a gun.

We need a peace army of a million edicated men and women to go into he world and wage the war of ideas—

As announced in "For the Record" n page 31, with this issue Alton M. Motter concludes three years of service s managing editor of The Pulpit, dur- ng which he has also conducted the ook review department. Mr. Motter is ontinuing as executive director of the Chicago Sunday Evening Club through he current season, after which he lans to re-enter some phase of the hurch's wider ministry. Meanwhile, e is available as a speaker or leader f ministers' meetings or church con- erences. His home address is 371 Ar- ington Ave., Elmhurst, Ill.—The Pub- ishers.

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o wage peace through teaching, writ- ng, speaking, serving, working and iving sacrificially with the people of ther countries until we win them to understand and want peace and de- mocracy as we do.

A huge undertaking? Yes, but not so great as that of fighting another war.

Religion in Today's Irreligious Age

THE lesson all of us ought to learn from one aspect of Noah's life is this: While it is difficult to be re- ligious in an irreligious age, neverthe- less it is possible to resist the forces of paganism around us and be good even when surrounded on all sides by evil. Frequently young people blame their moral failures on the pressure of evil around them. They really don't want to drink, but when they are out with the gang the social pressures are too much and they fall into the habit of drinking as the easy way out. Girls and boys have told me that they did not want to smoke, but their friends made so much fun of them that it was easier to smoke than to be exposed to ridicule. All of us experience day by day the constant, deadening pres- sures of an evil world and ungodly society. We know how difficult it is to hold to high standards of righteous- ness. But Noah stands for all time as an example of the fact that you *can* swim against the current. It is com- paratively easy to be good when everyone around you is good. But to his everlasting credit let it be said of Noah that he was good when goodness was not the fashion.—*John C. Middle- kauff, Stone Church, Huntingdon, Pa.*

Pulpit Post

Devotional Readings

SIR: The 1955 series of "Living with Peace of Mind" is now available free upon request to ministers and other religious workers. This is a weekly column of devotional readings for church papers and the church page of newspapers. It is also widely used in devotional meetings and radio pro- grams.

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Modern Saint

SIR: I read with interest Raymond Calkin's sermon, "Everyday Saints." There was one such saint whom he failed to mention and that was "Saint Raymond." Those who know Dr. Calkins personally feel that he should be included in a list whose personality radiates the Christian spirit.

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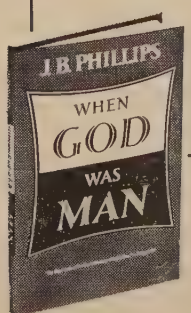

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Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• In the Direction Of the Skid

INSTRUCTIONS for new drivers advise that if you get into a skid you should turn your steering wheel *in the direction of the skid.* Imagine that! When headed for disaster, turn your steering wheel in that direction. It seems like fool's advice, but it really reflects the law of life: When a crisis comes, face up to it and you will overcome. When danger loomed large on Jesus' path, he set his face steadfastly in that direction. So it must be with us. When skidding on life's slippery highway, turn your steering wheel in the direction of the skid. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me."—*Vance Geier, Director, Student Christian Assn., Glendale College, Calif.*

• *Putting Our Own House In Order*

NO greater responsibility rests upon the Christian citizen than to put his own house in order. In conflicting and competing societies, it is easy for people to repent of each other's sins. It is far more difficult to remove the beam from one's own eye. The building of a sound and healthy domestic society is a form of competition in which no harm can be done and much good can be achieved. The domestic community where men and women can determine their faith by conscience and freely express it, subject only to the rights of others, where they can choose their vocation and have equal opportunity to pursue it, where they can rear their children to meet the responsibilities of an oncoming generation, where they can satisfy legitimate material needs, where their concern reaches to their fellow men around the world—that kind of domestic community will stand as a magnet to attract all men everywhere. To build it is our first task!—*O. Frederick Nolde, before the World Council's Second Assembly.*

• *Disciplined Dedication*

WE measure loyalty by conformity. We try to stamp out dissent. We even want our religion thinned down, sweetened and sprayed on. We are trying to frighten the preachers with easy labels—we want them to be time-servers who are ruled by public opinion and who reflect certain attitudes that have been ruled orthodox. We have become cringing conformists, reeds in the wind. But spiritual greatness stems from Jesus Christ who was out of step all his life. He was a nonconformist. His words were radical and revolutionary. So were his deeds. He never believed in the modern slogan, "Give the people what they think they want."

We are paying and will continue to pay the price of being reeds in the wind, bending toward a stifling conformity. A famous jurist puts it this way: "Inner decay is the cause that commands unanimity. Our dangers are not from the outrageous, but from the conforming who take their virtues and their tastes, like their shirts and furniture, from the limited patterns offered in the market." Our fears are breeding an instinctive hostility to growth and change. But as the biological sciences remind us, there is no progress without differences. We must not be afraid to change.

Someone has well said, "If you don't stand for anything, you'll fall for anything." We need cedars, not reeds. We need people who have convictions. We need to *grow* in grace and knowledge and not presume we have it already distilled. The only hope of a secure or livable world is in the people who in disciplined dedication seek to serve God instead of merely pleasing people.—*John G. Simmons, St. Matthews Lutheran, North Hollywood, Calif.*

Pulpit Calendar

Jan. 1—New Year's Day.
Jan. 2—2nd Sunday after Christmas.
Jan. 3-10—Universal Week of Prayer.
Jan. 6—Epiphany.
Jan. 9—1st Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 16—2nd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 16-22—Church and Economic Life Week.
Jan. 18-25—Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (World Council of Churches).
Jan. 23—3rd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 30—4th Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 30-Feb. 6—Youth Week.
Feb. 6—5th Sunday after Epiphany.
Feb. 13—6th Sunday after Epiphany. Race Relations Day.
Feb. 20—7th Sunday after Epiphany. Day of Prayer for Students.
Feb. 20-27—Brotherhod Week.
Feb. 23—Ash Wednesday.
Feb. 25—World Day of Prayer.
Feb. 27—1st Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 6—2nd Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 13—3rd Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 20—4th Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 25—The Annunciation.
Mar. 27—Passion Sunday.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

• One Reassuring Ligh

NEAR Bogota, Colombia, is the great salt mountain of Zipaquira that has been mined for 400 years. Great tunnels, some towering 70 fee in height, have been hollowed out o the heart of this mountain by the sal miners. Because one of these tunnels as high as a five-story house, looke so much like a cathedral, it was made by the government into an under ground church.

The nave of this underground church measured 150 feet in length the cross on the altar stood 20 fee high. Massive in size, great in strength, beautiful in its natural glit tering walls, one thing it lacked. Work men had to sink a 2200 foot tunnel to provide a reassuring ray of daylight for nervous visitors. Christ is our reassuring light.—*Neal D. Bachman Tremont Methodist, Tremont, Pa.*

• Reality in Worship

I HAVE always been haunted by the idea that Greek tragedy offers one of the greatest clues to reality in worship. This is one reason why the mass, the passion music and such a work as Handel's *Messiah* are so deeply moving. They express the whole range of human emotions, the savage depth of evil, the abyss of suffering the purification, exaltation, agony and final triumph of one who was in truth the epitome of all tragic heroes. As Mark Rutherford once said after hearing the music of the *Messiah*, "Even the poorest and humblest of men have a right to remember that He too was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief."—*Leslie T. Pennington, First Unitarian, Chicago, Ill.*

• *Ramsey and Melville*

PAUL Ramsey's brilliant book on Christian ethics starts with the following remarkable paragraph: "In his novel *Pierre*, Herman Melville sourly defines the gospel of love as 'a volume bound in rose-leaves, clasped with violets, and by the beaks of hummingbirds printed with peach juice on the leaves of lilies.'"

To this thrust of Melville, Ramsey, professor of ethics at Princeton, declares: "Actually Christian ethics is more like labor and fortitude than 'sweetness and light.'"—*Don E. Smucker, Bethany and Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Chicago, Ill.*

A Balanced Diet

By Alton M. Motter

A GLANCE at the list of "Books Preachers Are Reading" clearly indicates that ministers are not confining their reading to any one area of interest. Publishers continue to provide a balanced diet. An unusual volume which no clergyman nor his wife will want to miss is Helen Doss's ★★★★*The Family Nobody Wanted* (Little, Brown & Co., 267 pages, $3.75). A 4-star book in anyone's language, this is delightful reading for almost every age-range. To most ministers it will demonstrate the power of a dedicated couple to overcome the obstacles inherent in adopting 12 children who came from a variety of racial backgrounds. In the opinion of the author and her husband, there isn't such a thing as an unwanted child. Somewhere there are always those who would love such a child. The job that needs to be done is to help the ones needing love to find people who have it. This well-written, warm, human story of how one parsonage family put that theory into practice is destined, in the opinion of this reviewer, to be a best seller for many months to come.

Ministers will find the two new resource books by Harper an invaluable help in the field of worship and sermonic planning. ★★★*The Old Testament and the Fine Arts,* by Cynthia Pearl Maus (826 pages, $5.95), is a companion volume to her classic *Christ and the Fine Arts* and treats the major sections of the Old Testament with a similar pattern of appropriate art interpretations, poetry, stories and hymns. Outstanding among the stories is the account of "Moses, Leader of a People," by Sir Winston Churchill. ★★★*Worship Resources for the Christian Year,* compiled and edited by Charles L. Wallis (483 pages, $4.95), is clearly the best volume of its kind to appear in the last decade. The timely litanies, prayers, poems and quotations from over 400 contributors make this a literal gold mine of homiletic suggestions for all of the regular and special days of the church year. Five indexes help to place this splendid material at the preacher's fingertips.

In the field of published sermons, ★★★*Horns and Halos in Human Nature,* by J. Wallace Hamilton (Revell, 173 pages, $2.50), deserves to head the list. This pastor of St. Petersburg's famous "drive-in" church belongs among today's great preachers. Based on the parable of the prodigal son, these 14 sermons should be read and studied by every preacher who wants to improve his art. Here is balanced food for today's worshipers. Dr. Hamilton reflects a firm grasp of the Christian gospel and a healthy theological balance. He knows how to communicate with people. His sermons march according to a well-paced tempo and, what is more important, they *arrive!* His quotations and illustrations are well selected and strong. One cannot help but reflect: What would happen if every pulpit throughout Christendom could produce such sermons? This is Christian preaching at its best!

★★*Channels of Spiritual Power* (Revell, 186 pages, $2.50), a recent Frank C. Laubach volume, is concerned with the removal of the soul's spiritual blockades. The author believes that the world remains thirsty for love because too few of us are pipe lines from heaven. The book reveals something of the secret which accounts for Dr. Laubach's distinguished literacy achievements on four continents. He presents the book with the hope that it will help church members get out of the bleachers into God's game of life as more active participants. Another volume in this same field is Howard Thurman's *The Creative Encounter* (Harper, 153 pages, $2.00). Put briefly, this is a simple yet profound statement of the Christian faith and philosophy of the author who wrote the volume from his Merrick Lectures given at Ohio Wesleyan University last March.

Other volumes within a wide range of themes include Howard Conn's ★*The Hope That Sets Men Free* (Harper, 192 pages, $2.50), a thoughtful post-Evanston treatment of the common hopes of men and the validity of the Christian hope. J. B. Phillips contributes two new books: ★*Plain Christianity* (Macmillan, 87 pages, $1.65), a series of 9 British radio talks which could be studied for style and content by every preacher who speaks on the air, and *When God Was Man* (Abingdon, 62 pages, $1.00), a brief—much too brief—account of the challenge of Jesus' life to modern man. An unusual but interesting collection of 14 short stories or excerpts in which the central character is a pastor, priest or rabbi, has been edited by Charles Neider and published by Abingdon under the title *Men of the High Calling* (238 pages, $3.50). And, of course, by this time nearly every preacher knows that Oxford University Press has published 75 selected letters of the *Christian Century's* famed Simeon Stylites under the caption ★★★*Like a Mighty Army* (182 pages, $2.50). But a great many preachers didn't know, until this volume appeared, that their author was Halford E. Luccock. Every preacher ought to know, too, that here is a wealth of illustrations and, what is even more important, *illustration suggestions* for sermon building.

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No Star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

November	December	This Month	*An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.*
9	2	1	**Preaching.** *Walter Russell Bowie. Abingdon Press,* **$2.75**
4	1	2	**The Old Testament and the Fine Arts.** *Cynthia Maus. Harper,* **$5.95**
		3	**The Family Nobody Wanted.** Helen Doss. Little, Brown, **$3.75**
	8	4	**Like a Mighty Army.** *Halford E. Luccock. Oxford,* **$2.50**
6	3	5	**This Do and Live.** *Roy M. Pearson. Abingdon Press,* **$2.00**
		6	**Horns and Halos in Human Nature.** J. Wallace Hamilton. Revell, **$2.50**
	9	7	**The Teaching Ministry of the Church.** *James D. Smart. Westminster,* **$3.00**
	7	8	**Who Speaks for God.** *Gerald Kennedy. Abingdon Press,* **$2.50**
8	6	9	**Jeremiah.** *Elmer A. Leslie. Abingdon Press,* **$4.75**
		10	**Worship Resources for the Christian Year.** Ed., Charles L. Wallis. Harper, **$4.95**

The Editor's Page

The New Year—a Gift

AT THE BEGINNING of another New Year, it is fitting to thank God for the gift of time. Each morning we receive from his provident hand a new day, marvelous in its potentialities. Usually we appropriate these new days without thought, and without gratitude. Now let us reflect, and be thankful.

God is not limited by time. God is, and he has always been, and he will always be. There was a time when we did not exist, when even our planet was without form and void. But there was no time when God did not exist. The time will come when each of us will die, and even our planet will cease to be. But God will never die. The eternal is not subject to time.

God's independence of time is a great comfort to us, his time-bound children. Our days are numbered, but in him we can, in the wonderful phrase used by the early Christian church, "put on immortality." In him we can rise above time.

We mortals are here today and gone tomorrow. All our plans are circumscribed by time. On the Chicago Midway Lorado Taft's great sculpture shows the generations passing before a mysterious hooded figure—the figure of Time. Like waves they rise from the unknown and mount and mount until they reach a central point. There stands the conqueror in his pride, looking down on all other men from an eminence of glory. But his proud supremacy is only for a moment. As the waves of humanity go down and finally disappear on the other side of the monument, there are despairing faces which look like his. This massive sculpture was inspired by a verse which voices the age-old complaint of time-bound man:

> Time flies, you say?
> Ah, no. Alas!
> Time stays. We go.

THIS was true until the Christian era, and it is possible for modern men, even those who build works of art on the campuses of great universities, to think it is still true. But in Christ, God revealed how man may break through time into eternity. Christ pointed the way to put off mortality and lay hold of immortality; to rise above the tyranny of time. His way was the cross. Our way can be no different.

That is a wonderful word in the 90th Psalm: "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." From eternity to eternity God is. Never young and never old, he is above time. He is the creator of time, the builder of the years, the architect of the centuries. In search of immortality, the Pharaohs built their mountains of stone, but the Pharaohs died and even the Pyramids are crumbling away. But God lives and his creation endures in him.

How can we say God is above time? We discover his transcendence in his purpose. The story of creation shows that the world was born in an act of divine will. The Creator shaped the world in his mind and spirit and brought it into existence by an act of will. He had a purpose for it to serve and so the world was born. He was the first cause, the prime mover, because he had this purpose. The world came into existence and continues to exist because God wills it. Without his will time would end, just as without Rembrandt's will the "Night Watch" never would have been painted. Even then if he had been dissatisfied he could have destroyed it; it continued to exist because he willed that it should survive. So it is with the greater masterpiece of God's creation.

WHAT is God's purpose, upon which time depends? Why has he given us this New Year, these new days, these hours and moments of time? The first chapter of Ephesians gives us the answer. Perhaps a paraphrase of Paul's tightly packed reasoning will serve the ends of understanding. He hymns his gratitude to God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, he says, has blessed us in Christ with spiritual good to be found in heaven itself. God's creative will included us in his purpose for Christ even before the foundation of the world. We are and have always been a part of the purpose which transcends time. We are blessed in time because we too are touched with eternity through Jesus Christ.

What is the design behind all this? It is that we should be holy and blameless before God. Impossible? Not at all. God himself has "destined us to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. . . . For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."

There it is! In Christ we know the meaning of history, the purpose of time. By faith we can grasp this purpose out of which the New Year is born and make it our own. Time is the medium for the fulfillment of the kindly will of the living God. As Paul said: "In him, according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will, we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory."

(Because of the temporary illness of Editor Charles Clayton Morrison, this page is written by Harold E. Fey, contributing editor of The Pulpit. Dr. Morrison's address is 6144 South Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois.)

For the Record—

THIRTY-SIX months ago the masthead of The Pulpit first carried the name of Alton M. Motter as one of its editors. This is the final issue prepared under his direction, and I have asked for the privilege of writing this column this month. There are probably a number of things Mr. Motter would have liked to say himself by way of leave-taking, but I have some things I want to say about him, so he has been gracious enough to step aside and let me say them.

Nonsubsidized Organization

As Pulpit subscribers know, the Christian Century Foundation, which publishes The Pulpit and the *Christian Century*, is a nonprofit, nonsubsidized organization which must try to pay its way as it goes. To do that, it is necessary that we should have the help at times of friends who can give part-time service, while relying on other employment for their main support. Alton Motter has been one of these, and it is quite impossible to thank him adequately for the help which he has given this overburdened editorial office.

Alton Motter had previous part-time experience with this organization before he came to Chicago. While executive secretary of the St. Paul, Minn., council of churches he had also served as the *Christian Century's* staff correspondent for that state. In Chicago his main task has been as executive director of this city's famed Sunday Evening Club. For most of the past year, however, he also carried a staggering load as one of the key men in the public relations program for the Evanston assembly of the World Council of Churches.

Busy Schedule

Yet, while doing all these things and more, Alton Motter still managed somehow to find time to edit our *20th Century Quarterly*, which treats the International Sunday school lessons, and to prepare The Pulpit month after month. Where he found the time to do it, I have no idea. But he did, and all of us—readers, publishers and the other members of the Foundation's editorial force—are deep in his debt.

Next month there will be a new name on the masthead. We will wait until then to unveil it. But it will be a long time, I am sure, before Pulpit readers forget the great days of Alton Motter's managing editorship.

P.H.

The Pulpit

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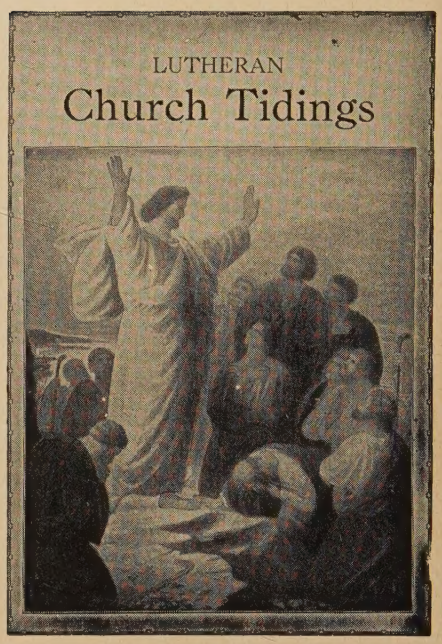

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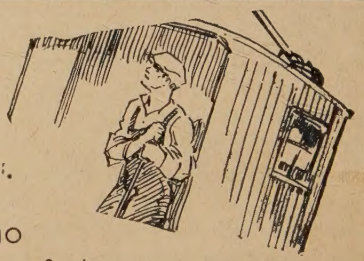

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